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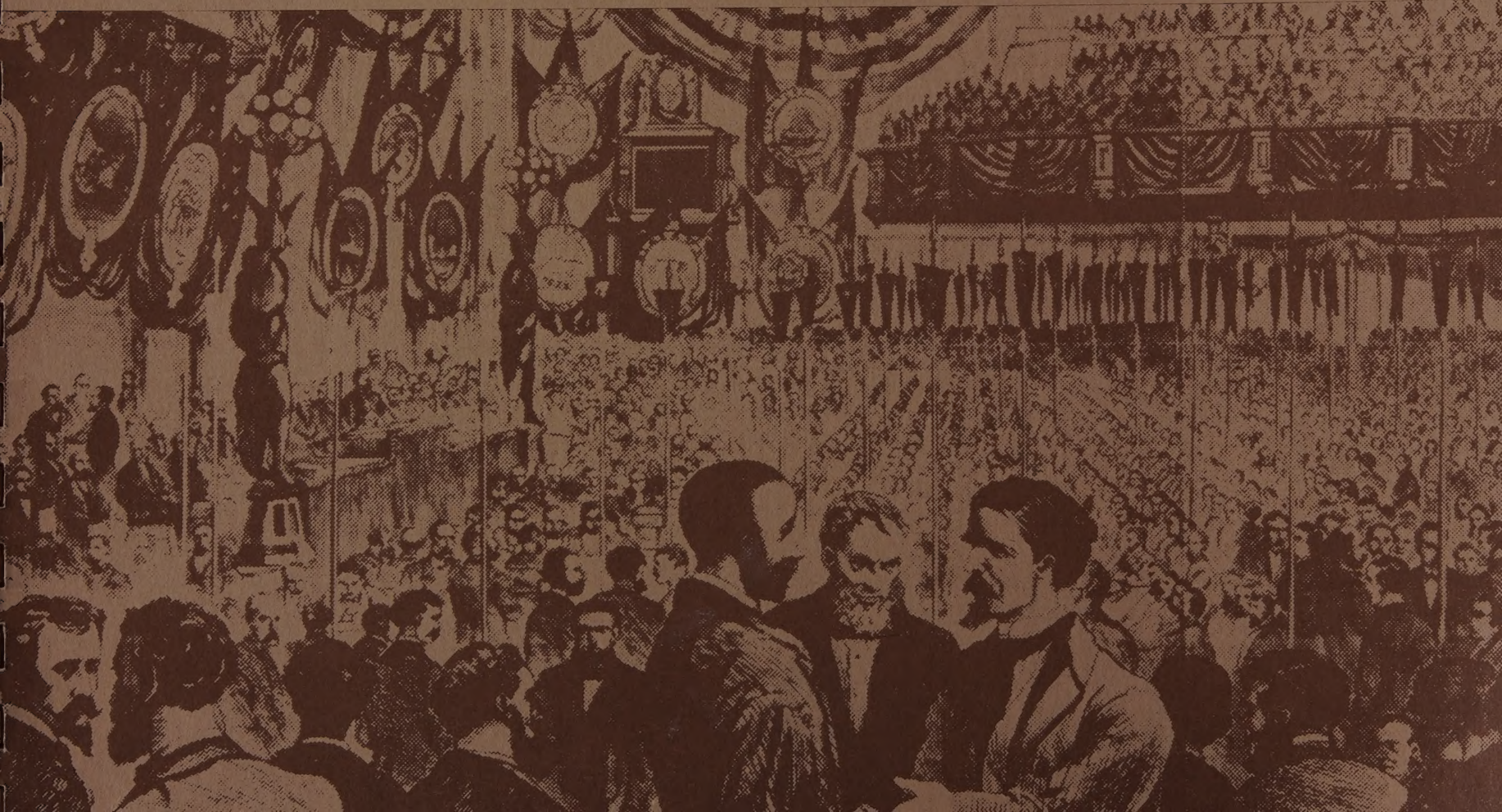
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THE CONVENTION CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

AN OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT

CENTER FOR REAL ESTATE AND URBAN ECONOMICS
Institute of Urban and Regional Development
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
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A RESEARCH PROJECT TO STUDY THE
FEASIBILITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO AS

**THE
CONVENTION CITY
OF
SAN LUIS OBISPO
AN OBJECTIVE
ASSESSMENT**

ABSTRACT

This Report is a study of the feasibility of the city of San Luis Obispo as a convention city.

The study was approached from three separate and distinct directions.

The first approach explored the needs and attitudes of organizations who meet in convention and presents research, analysis, and conclusions relating to the factors considered in selecting convention cities.

Approach two led into an assessment of the experience of other cities in an attempt to discover what their physical resources are, what their community attitude is, how they got started as convention hosts, and how they each compare with the city of San Luis Obispo.

A final direction carried the investigators through assessments of the city of San Luis Obispo and its peripheral areas both from the standpoint of the status of its physical "plant" and from the view of the attitudes of the people as reflected by its leaders and businessmen.

The collection of pertinent data involved the following:

1. Survey of the various types of organizations that hold conventions.
2. Survey of factors influencing the selection of a particular city as a convention city.
3. Survey of convention cities of size similar to San Luis Obispo.
4. Survey of convention facilities.
5. Survey of convention programs.
6. Survey of conventions and meetings held in San Luis Obispo to date.
7. Survey of distinctive features of San Luis Obispo.

All conclusions are summarized in the opening section.



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INTRODUCTION

This study was undertaken to gather and to present data from which objective assessments can be made of the strengths and weaknesses of San Luis Obispo and, hence, the feasibility of San Luis Obispo as a convention city.

For the purposes of this study, the word "CONVENTION" means:

An organized meeting or conference of representatives most of which are not residents of San Luis Obispo County.

Data has been collected from Library resources and trade literature; several original research surveys were undertaken, and interviews and correspondence with community leaders and representatives of convention oriented groups were conducted both locally and in other cities.

The investigators have analyzed this data and have presented certain conclusions. However, this subject, by its very nature, does not lend itself to simple, clean-cut conclusions; therefore, much of the raw data collected has been made an integral part of this report so that individual readers may make their own evaluations.

This study did not undertake, per se, to make determinations regarding the financial feasibility of a convention center nor did it undertake to determine a location for such a center within the community. These investigations, by their very nature, should follow conclusions and programs established as a result of evaluations made of the data presented in this study.



SUMMARY OF ANALYSES AND CONCLUSIONS

summary and conclusions

Conventions and conventionneering are well imbedded into the warp and woof of the fabric of modern-day America. Conventions have become revered institutions and an essential part of American life. Robert A. Schmettler, Executive Director of the Fresno Convention Bureau, estimates that there are 2,800 organizations in California which meet in convention. Reasons for holding conventions are many and varied, but basically conventions promote and give vent to the exchange of ideas. They most often represent a studied interplay between very serious business and light social activity.

A number of cities have discovered that hosting conventions represents profitable enterprise, and some cities have gone to great lengths to promote themselves as convention cities. Studies conducted by the International Association of Convention Bureaus, show that the average daily expenditure per delegate to state and regional conventions was \$22.75 in 1948, and \$18.14 in 1957. Robert E. Tremaine of the Riverside Division of Commerce states that the average convention delegate of 1957 stays 5.1 days and spends \$166.44 or \$42.25 per day. Convention money can be an extremely important stimulant to the economic well-being of a community as these figures represent new dollars flowing into the local economy, dollars which will turn over an average of 4.2 times before being dissipated to the outside.

The question here is, can San Luis Obispo be reasonably assured of success if it were to promote itself as a convention city? In the final analysis, the question of feasibility is relative. Unqualified yes or no answers are virtually impossible. Feasibility decisions must take into account the resources of the community, the "investment" monies available, and the type of return expected. Few communities are capable of doing everything at once, and San Luis Obispo is no exception.

For an answer, qualified as it might be, it was necessary to approach the basic question from three directions:

1. What of the organizations who meet in conventions?
 - a. What do they do in their conventions?
 - b. What do they look for in selecting a convention city?
 - c. How does San Luis Obispo correlate with their criteria?
 - d. What do conventioning organizations think of San Luis Obispo as it stands?

There are several reasons why San Luis Obispo should want to attract conventions. These reasons are:

1. Conventions will bring new money into the community and stimulate the economy.
2. Conventions will acquaint new people with San Luis Obispo, people who may choose to become tourists or who may choose to settle and to make investments in the community at a future date.
3. Development of new jobs, particularly for people with low skills and who represent a critical unemployment problem to the community.
4. Improvement of the city's commercial and recreation sectors which in turn will offer to the people greater choice of goods and services and entertainment.
5. Conventions will not add materially to demands made on public services such as police, fire, parks, libraries, and schools.

There are several reasons why San Luis Obispo would be attractive to conventions:

1. The city's location, midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, would appeal to those organizations looking for a halfway point provided those organizations are willing to travel by auto, train, or bus.
2. San Luis Obispo is blessed with a very benevolent climate.
3. Numerous outdoor recreation opportunities exist in the areas surrounding San Luis Obispo.
4. San Luis Obispo's small-town character has definite appeal to certain groups.

To improve its convention city image, San Luis Obispo will have to take positive steps to overcome its present limitations and to strengthen its advantages. An action program must be undertaken, the first steps of which are very, very basic:

1. CONVENTION ELEMENTS MUST UNITE

First and foremost, those elements of the community which most directly serve the convention must unite to develop a convention business. Specifically, the Chamber of Commerce, hotel, motel and restaurant operators, operators of related service establishments, the downtown merchant group, and those governmental and fraternal groups which regulate the use of the city's public and private meeting places must be willing to cooperate and display a united spirit of hospitality and concern for the conventioneer. It is absolutely necessary that such a spirit exist if conventions are to be attracted, are to be successful, and if repeat business is desired.

2. COMMUNITY SUPPORT MUST BE MARSHALLED

5. COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS MUST BE ESTABLISHED

Systems of communication must be devised and maintained between all elements serving the convention guest. Everyone who comes in contact with the conventioneer must be able to quickly and authoritatively answer the typical questions: "What's going on in town?", "What's there to see and do?" Not only management, but all levels of staff--waitresses, hotel clerks, motel maids, and service station attendants, to name but a few--must be impressed with the fact that their very jobs depend on their attitudes and their up-to-date knowledge of community activities.

6. COOPERATION WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES MUST OCCUR

San Luis Obispo must work in every way possible with sister cities and county authorities to develop a more favorable community image for the conventioneer. The limited size of the county makes it necessary that all segments work together, each involving itself in the tasks that it can best perform in the interests of the total economic benefit of all. Development of recreational facilities in adjacent areas should be especially encouraged.

7. COMMERCIAL AIR CONNECTION MUST BE OBTAINED

San Luis Obispo must continue to work to obtain a commercial air line connection at San Luis Obispo. Data collected in this study pointedly emphasizes the importance of air accessibility to the convention city. All things equal, a Los Angeles delegate can fly to San Francisco and be at his convention headquarters in less time than it would take him to drive to San Luis Obispo. For the business and professional man, time is of the essence, and it must be remembered that this is the man who most frequently attends conventions.

8. CONVENTION SUPPORT SERVICES AND FACILITIES MUST BE DEVELOPED

All sectors of the community must undertake to furnish new services and/or facilities to better serve the conventioneer and his spouse. To overcome the lack of "things to do", improvements need to be made in the downtown area to develop "distinctive" qualities both in merchandising and in atmosphere. Completion of Mission Plaza would be a giant step in this direction. Developments such as Rose Alley and the Garden Street Alley should receive every encouragement. The city must not construe "modernization" with "improvement". Historical elements as well as those



SURVEY OF TYPICAL CONVENTION PROGRAMS



Programs of 100 organizations who held conventions in Bakersfield, Fresno, Palm Springs, Palo Alto, Sacramento, Salinas, San Diego, San Jose, Santa Monica, Stockton and Yosemite were evaluated in order to determine the type of activities various organizations engaged in during their conventions. This sampling was random except that programs of organizations meeting in Los Angeles or San Francisco were eliminated because of the tremendous size differential between those cities and San Luis Obispo. Even so, the cities included are all larger than San Luis Obispo, Yosemite being the lone exception.

While this survey was particularly concerned with obtaining data relative to activities, it was also helpful in further identifying the prevalent type of convention and the length of the average convention.

a n a l y s i s

The programs analyzed represented organizations meeting in National, Regional, State and District types of conventions. "State" conventions were the prevalent type; 47 out of the 92 which could be classified fell into this category.

Duration of these programs ranged from 1 day to 6 days. Three days was both the mean and the most prevalent convention length represented in this sample.

The predominate convention activity is communication--communication seemingly required to be conducted on a face-to-face basis. This activity is sometimes handled in very large groups where communication is basically one way; sometimes in small groups where communication is multi-directional. Oftentimes this communication takes place during a formal meal which may be breakfast although more frequently it is lunch and/or dinner. Talk and listen are the meat and potatoes of conventions.

Second rank activities are social in nature and are primarily recreational, yet these activities permit exchanges of ideas and information to be carried on in less formal circumstances. Tours, dances, golf, cocktail parties, and fashion shows rate high in this area.

Activities and their relative importance as determined by this survey are shown in the following ranking:

RANK	ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS PROGRAMMING ACTIVITY (100 POSSIBLE)
1	General meetings with speakers	88
2	Registration	86
3	Luncheons	76
4	Banquets	75
5	Group meetings, seminars, etc.	59
6	Breakfasts	43
7	Receptions	41
8	Tours	35
9	Board Meetings	33
	Dances	33
10	Displays and exhibits	27
	Golf	27
	Cocktail parties	27
11	Coffee breaks	21
12	Fashion shows	15
13	Church services	8
14	Installations (separate from meetings)	5
15	Cruises	4
	Sports events (other than golf)	4
16	Card parties	3
17	Films (not in combination with meetings)	2
18	Concert	1
19	Fun night	1
20	Parade	1

SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELECTION OF A PARTICULAR CONVENTION SITE



influence factors

150 organizations which had either held a convention in California within the last year or were planning to hold one within the ensuing year were contacted and asked to complete a questionnaire indicating their reasons for selecting a particular city for their convention.

Convention announcements appearing in the January 1967 issue of WORLD CONVENTION DATES served as a list from which the 150 organizations were chosen.

The selection of organizations was made at random with three exceptions:

1. The organization must have met or would meet within a year of the poll date.
2. Organizations who stated their attendance in excess of 1000 were not considered.
3. An effort was made to have as many California convention cities represented as possible.

99 or 67% of the 150 organizations polled responded with usable information. This response to a mailed questionnaire is considered excellent.

analysis

Size of meeting space and location of the convention city go hand in hand in importance as primary decision factors.

Of considerable interest is the fact that air transport access to the convention location was considered more important than ease of auto access. Concern for bus or train connections to the convention city was negligible.

Close relationship of lodgings to convention meeting space was repeatedly stressed as a prime consideration. The results from a second questionnaire, included in this report also, point up the desirability of integrated housing and meeting facilities.

Many organizations are motivated by their own previous experience in selecting convention cities. If their experience is favorable, they are quite apt to return. On the other hand, recommendations made by other organizations appear to have little influence.

Availability of a banquet facility capable of seating the entire convention is very important to most organizations. Cost of the use of convention facilities--while important--was not a prime concern in the selection of a convention city.

Climate and sight-seeing characteristics of the locale were of only moderate concern. Of even less concern were attractions of the city or area which might stimulate delegates to come early or stay after the convention.

Contrary to the popular image of conventions, little concern was expressed for "night'life" activities.

Convention planning assistance by the convention city was only of moderate concern; a number of organizations expressed a very definite need for help, others seemingly could handle things on their own.

A number of organizations select their convention city on the basis of that city being "pushed" by a member or section of that organization. Bidding by delegates to have their city selected was frequently reported. Several organizations noted that their selection was based on a rotational system; i. e., north one year, south the next year. Two organizations reported provisions in their constitutions which required that their meetings be held in specific cities.



THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS RESPONDED: Agricultural Aircraft Association... American Dairy Association of California... American Institute of Planners, California Chapter... American Water Works Association, California Section... Arson & Fire Investigation Seminar of California... Cabrillo Civic Club (California)... California Association of Airport Executives... California Association for Childhood Education... California Association of County Agricultural Commissioners... California Association of County Treasurers... California Association of County Veteran Service Officers... California Association of Independent Insurance Adjusters, Inc..... California Association of Nurserymen..... California Association of Personnel Directors... California Association of Public School Business Officials... California Association of Sanitariums... California Bankers Association... California Beet Growers Association, Ltd... California Certified Boiler & Elevator Inspectors... California City Managers Department... California Council of Civil Engineers & Land Surveyors... California Council for Retarded Children... California Exchange Clubs... California Federation Retired Civil Employees... California Fertilizer Association... California History Foundation Institute... California Junior College Association... California Juvenile Officers Association... California Land Title Association... California Lathing & Plastering Contractors Association... California Laundry & Linen Supply Association... California League of City Employees Association, Inc... California Medical Assistants Association... California Municipal Treasurers Association... California Newspaper Publishers Association... California Olive Association... California Peace Officers Association... California Physical Therapists Association... California Probation, Parole & Correctional Association... California Retail Jewelers Association... California Retired Teachers Association... California School Nurses Organization... California Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc... California Society of Internal Medicine... California Society of Professional Engineers... California Society of Radiologic Technologists... California Society Sons of American Revolution... Cal-State Civil Defense & Disaster Association... California State Council of Retail Clerks Union... California State Dental Society of Anesthesiology... California State Fraternal Congress... California State Horsemen's Association... California State Psychological Association... California Tax Collectors Association... California Taxpayers Association... California Water Pollution Control Association... California Weed Conference... California Wool Growers Association... California Young Farmers Association... Council of California Growers... County Records Association of California... County Welfare Directors Association of California... Delta Kappa Gamma Society of California... Disabled American Veterans Department of California... Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children & Adults... Engineering & Grading Contractors Association... Farmers Insurance Company... Federated Fire Fighters of California... Future Business Leaders of America... Independent Order Odd Fellows Grand Enc. of California... International Association for Identification... Laryngological, Rhinological & Otolological West... Marine Corps League Department of California... Marshals Association of California... Military Order of Purple Heart... Music Teachers Association of California... Northern California Pharmaceutical Association... Pacific Coast Gas Association... Pacific Coast Gas-Customer Service Conference... Pacific Coast Shippers Advisory Board... Pacific Coast Surgical Association... Pacific Southwest Area Council of YMCA... Pearl Harbor Survivors Association... Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors of California... Reserve Officers Association of U.S. Department of California... Society of California Accountants... Sons of Union Veterans of Civil War... Western Agricultural Chemicals Association... Western Classified Advertising Association... Western College Association... Western Fairs Association... Western Gas Processors & Oil Refiners Association... Western Pharmacology Society... Western Podiatry Congress APA... Western Radio-Television Association... Western Region of American Association of Advertising Agencies... Wine Institute.

THESE 99 ORGANIZATIONS CLASSIFIED THEMSELVES BY TYPE AS FOLLOWS:

49 Business/Professional	3 Fraternal	1 Hobby
18 Educational	3 Veteran	1 Patriotic
11 Governmental	2 Labor	1 Service
4 Trade	1 Civic	1 Youth
3 Business/Educational	1 Health	

CONVENTIONS WERE TYPES AS FOLLOWS: 2 National; 21 Regional; 75 State; 1 District.

Note: For the purposes of this poll, Regional means several States and District refers to subdivisions within the State.

DURATION OF CONVENTIONS REPRESENTED:

Duration in days:	1	1½	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	6
Number of Organizations:	4	-	26	7	40	2	17	1	1	-	1

ATTENDANCE:

In order to keep within what was felt to be the scale of conventions practical for San Luis Obispo in the foreseeable future, the poll purposefully eliminated those organizations which indicated their attendance would exceed 1000. The preponderance of replies came from organizations with a convention attendance ranging from 100 to 600. The mean convention size of this poll was 300; that is, for every organization reporting their size to be less than 300, there was another organization reporting their size to be greater than 300. Coincidentally, more organizations reported their convention attendance to be 300 than any other figure.

ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF DELEGATES BRINGING SPOUSES:

This percentage varied from 1 to 100%. Of 97 reporting organizations, not one reported that no one brought his spouse. The mean percentage of spouses present was 50%, and 50% was also the percentage reported more frequently than any other. This high percentage suggests that a convention to be completely successful must give careful consideration to the city which will be attractive to spouses and/or provide an adjunct program for the spouses.

ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF DELEGATES BRINGING FAMILIES:

This percentage proves to be very small. Of 97 organizations reporting on this item, 34 reported none of their delegates bring their families. Variation ranged from zero to a maximum estimate of 50%; the mean percentage of those 63 organizations reporting families present was 5%.



THE MAIN BODY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE WAS DESIGNED TO SOLICIT ANSWERS WHICH WOULD INDICATE THOSE ITEMS WHICH INFLUENCED EACH ORGANIZATION IN ITS SELECTION OF A PARTICULAR CITY IN WHICH TO HOLD ITS CONVENTION.

19 convention site selection factors were listed and each organization was requested to rank by importance only those factors which influenced them. Space was provided for organizations to list "other" factors.

Unfortunately, not all organizations followed directions in answering. Replies fell into three categories, each of which was tabulated:

- (A) Those who ranked the factors as per instructions, giving each factor its proper chronological order, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.
- (B) Those who ranked several factors at the same weight, evidently not being able to make a clear distinction as to which of two or three factors was actually the most important; hence several factors were judged Rank 1, several Rank 2, several Rank 3, etc.
- (C) Those who did not assign Rank weight at all.

As a result of the three approaches taken in answering the questionnaire, each factor was consequently analyzed three times;

- (A) Those "votes" properly ranked according to instructions were weighted, i. e. , first importance, 20 points; second importance 19 points; third importance, 18 points; etc. A weighted total was thereby obtained for each factor.
- (B) Those "votes" which placed several factors at the same rank were also weighted, but on a different scale. No organization ranking factors in this fashion exceeded a rank listing of 10, hence a scale of 10 was used: i. e. , first importance, 10 points; second importance, 9 points; etc. A weighted total was also obtained for each factor by this analysis.
- (C) Every "vote" received by a factor whether that vote was "weighted" or not was counted. A total vote (unweighted) was thereby obtained for each factor.

reaction to City 'X'

To test a hypothesis, a fictitious city and a special type of convention program were invented. A description of this city--City "X"--and its proposed convention program was set down and a questionnaire to test reaction to City "X" and its program was distributed along with the questionnaire dealing with the factors which influence the selection of convention cities. As in the case of the latter questionnaire, 99 or 67% of the 150 organizations polled responded with usable answers.

The location and characteristics of City "X" were, of course, very, very close to those of San Luis Obispo. The only thing added of significant note was a convention center capable of seating 800 in meetings and 400 in banquets. The convention program presented was referred to as an "upside-down" program. This program proposed to reverse the traditional "meet-all-day, live-it-up-all-night" routine of many conventions and would lean heavily upon involving some of the local ranches into a convention support activity that would make San Luis Obispo unique by simply capitalizing on assets which already exist or which could be developed at comparatively little cost. The "upside-down" idea proposed that the usual daytime meetings take place in the evening. Such a procedure would permit the fun and social activities along with the necessary small casual meetings to take place in the daytime and thereby compensate for the fact that San Luis Obispo's night life is quite limited.

The questionnaire solicited responses which would indicate the appeal of: (1) City "X's" location, (2) its basic physical characteristics, (3) the "upside-down" idea, and (4) family oriented activities. This questionnaire also asked within the context of the description of City "X" and its facilities, what might be done to make the city more attractive.

a n a l y s i s

If certain characteristics of City "X" (San Luis Obispo) could be changed then the attractiveness of the city was altered in the view of several organizations. Two points were made with special emphasis:

1. If commercial air connections were available, 68 of 91 organizations would find the city more attractive.
2. If a one-complex housing and meeting facility were available, 84 out of 97 organizations would find the city more attractive. This was the strongest reaction to any question asked in the course of this study.

A convention facility which would seat only 800 in meetings and 400 for banquets would be inadequate for 42% of those organizations responding.

It must be noted that the respondents to this questionnaire were either convention managers or committee-men charged by their respective organizations with the responsibility of selecting convention sites. Their answers are therefore significant.

Less than one out of every two of these people thought City "X" (San Luis Obispo) had a desirable location.

For every organization reporting that they would consider this City as it was described, there were two organizations who would not.

The "upside-down" idea received several spontaneous comments which suggest a degree of enthusiasm, but the vast majority rejected the idea and noted very serious, no-time-for-fun types of meetings.

Family oriented activities were of concern to but 12% of the organizations reporting.

Q. DO YOU FIND CITY "X's" LOCATION DESIRABLE?

A. Of 93 responses, 46 found City "X's" (San Luis Obispo) location desirable and 47 did not.

Q. WOULD YOUR ORGANIZATION CONSIDER CITY "X" AS DESCRIBED FOR A CONVENTION?

A. Only 29 organizations out of 89 would consider City "X" (San Luis Obispo) as a possible convention city.

Q. DO YOU BELIEVE THE "UPSIDE-DOWN" PROGRAM WOULD HAVE APPEAL TO YOUR ORGANIZATION?

A. The "upside-down" convention program idea found appeal to only 15 of 89 organizations responding to this question.

Q. ARE FAMILY ORIENTED ACTIVITIES IMPORTANT?

A. Only 1 out of every 9 responding organizations (88) considered family activities important to their conventions.

Q. REGARDLESS OF ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOVE, WOULD CITY "X" BE MORE ATTRACTIVE TO YOU:

(A) IF commercial air connections were available?

A. Of 91 responses, 68 organizations noted that they would find City "X" more attractive if commercial air connections were available.

(B) IF convention facilities were larger?

A. The size of the convention facilities described (800 for meetings; 400 for banquets) was considered adequate by 47 out of 85 respondents; 38 organizations would find City "X" more attractive if these facilities were larger.

(C) IF housing and meeting facilities were in one complex?

- A. 84 out of 97 organizations said they would find City "X" more attractive if a one-complex housing and meeting facility could be provided.

(D) IF the convention facility was a health resort-spa?

- A. Only 14 of the 76 organizations answering stated they could find City "X" more attractive under these circumstances.

The following general comments regarding the "upside-down" convention idea were received:

"No time for outdoor pleasures."

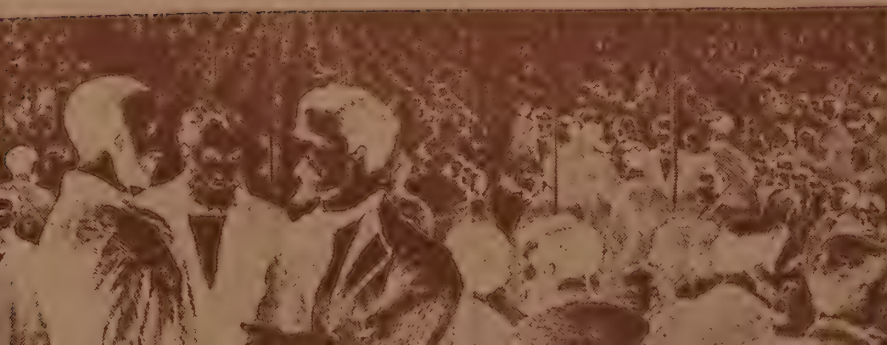
"Upside-down program best for social-fellowship type meeting rather than a professional one."

"The upside-down program might be a little hard to explain to taxpayers."

"Upside-down convention approach is very interesting although I feel it would not apply to this particular group (Business/Professional)."

"Upside-down program is a refreshing idea...however, would not sell to our membership."

"Upside-down program is a possibility; it would be a new idea for us."



SURVEY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND CONVENTION FACILITIES OF THE CITIES OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA





In order to learn of the relative success other cities have had as "convention cities," eight cities of central California were studied. Field trips were made and interviews were conducted with staff members of the local Chambers of Commerce, with convention facility managers, with local realtors, and with staff members of the city planning departments of Bakersfield, El Paso de Robles, Fresno, Monterey Peninsula (Carmel, Monterey, Pacific Grove), Pismo Beach, Salinas, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria. Every effort was made to appreciate each individual point of view and to summarize these points of view in a professional manner.

The investigations sought out information on the following topics:

1. The type of convention facilities available.
2. The size of each city and the role of population as a single factor related to their convention facilities.
3. The effectiveness of the convention facility operation.
4. The location of the convention facility relative to other community elements.
5. The effectiveness of Chamber of Commerce and/or Convention Bureau operation.
6. The effect of the convention facility on real property values and development in the immediate area.



Convention facilities seldom operate in the black. The public should recognize that some degree of subsidy is required. Degree is a determinant of each individual city, but the subsidy should reflect (1) the direct use the general public receives from the facility, and (2) the amount of financial support it wishes to give to entice conventions.

The ideal location for the convention facility would be as close to the amenities of a city as possible. According to the Stanford Research Institute, "The best site for any facility is that one which, above all others, encourages the optimum operation of the structure." Since a convention facility must be utilized by the people in the city as well as those coming to the city if it is to be financially successful, a geographically central location is recommended. Accessibility to housing, eating, entertainment and shopping facilities; proximity to major forms of transportation; the possibility of facility and parking expansion; and land acquisition costs are important considerations in site selection. Satisfying all of these requirements is difficult. Fresno and Bakersfield selected sites on the periphery of their core areas because of the mutual economic benefit the facility and the core had for the other. Monterey and Santa Barbara are exceptions because of their fairground facilities.

Automobile access cannot be overstressed. Local patrons and the air passenger conventioneer alike, will usually arrive at the site in an automobile. As the conventioneer makes only one trip to and from an airport, train or bus station, and will probably make many auto trips within the city, the relationship of the convention center to transportation centers is relatively unimportant.

The distance between meeting facilities and housing facilities was the major location deficiency noted in this survey; Fresno being the outstanding exception.

Of the cities polled, the success or lack of success of a Chamber of Commerce and/or Convention Bureau was directly attributable to: (1) the amount of monetary allocation received from its membership and/or city; (2) the qualifications of the Chamber or Bureau staff; (3) the quality of promotional materials; (4) the existence of a headquarters; and (5) most important of all, the wholehearted, continuous support of local business and the citizenry.

Land values adjacent to newly constructed convention facilities were found to increase appreciably. This, however, is what happens to values of land adjacent to any type of major improvement. The survey noted that newly constructed convention facilities had not fostered additional construction in their vicinity as of this date. Reasons for this appeared to be: (1) inflated land values; (2) tight zoning regulations; and (3) tight money (easing slightly as of this writing).

analysis

A very definite correlation exists between city size and type of convention facility. Of the eight cities studied, only Bakersfield and Fresno whose metropolitan populations are each greater than 180,000 have facilities which were designed as "Convention Centers," and which approach the "ideal" facility. As these centers have been built with public funds, they were built with a functional capacity beyond the usual convention requirements to allow local use for cultural, exhibition, and spectator sport activities. Monterey, Salinas, and Santa Barbara have privately owned inns, hotels or motels which have been designed to accommodate small scale conventions; population of these cities or metropolitan areas are 65,000, 52,000 and 130,000 respectively. Most of the cities studied have been blessed with some type of public facility which has been adapted into convention use; as examples, El Paso de Robles, Monterey and Santa Maria utilize county fair grounds which happen to be in their cities. At best, these facilities are make-shift; nevertheless, with varying degrees of success, the cities have shown ingenuity in taking advantage of these elements and are promoting themselves as convention cities.

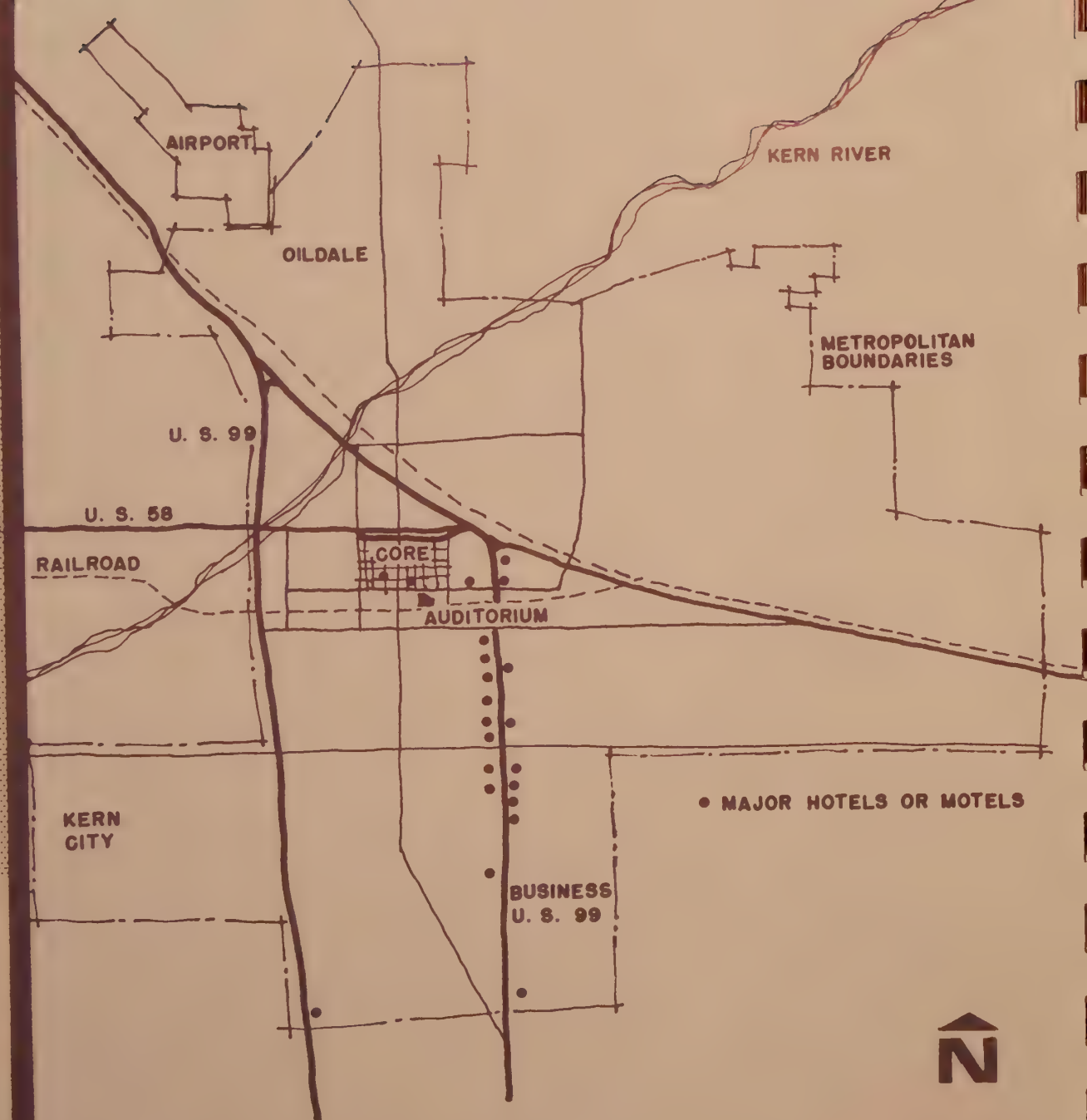
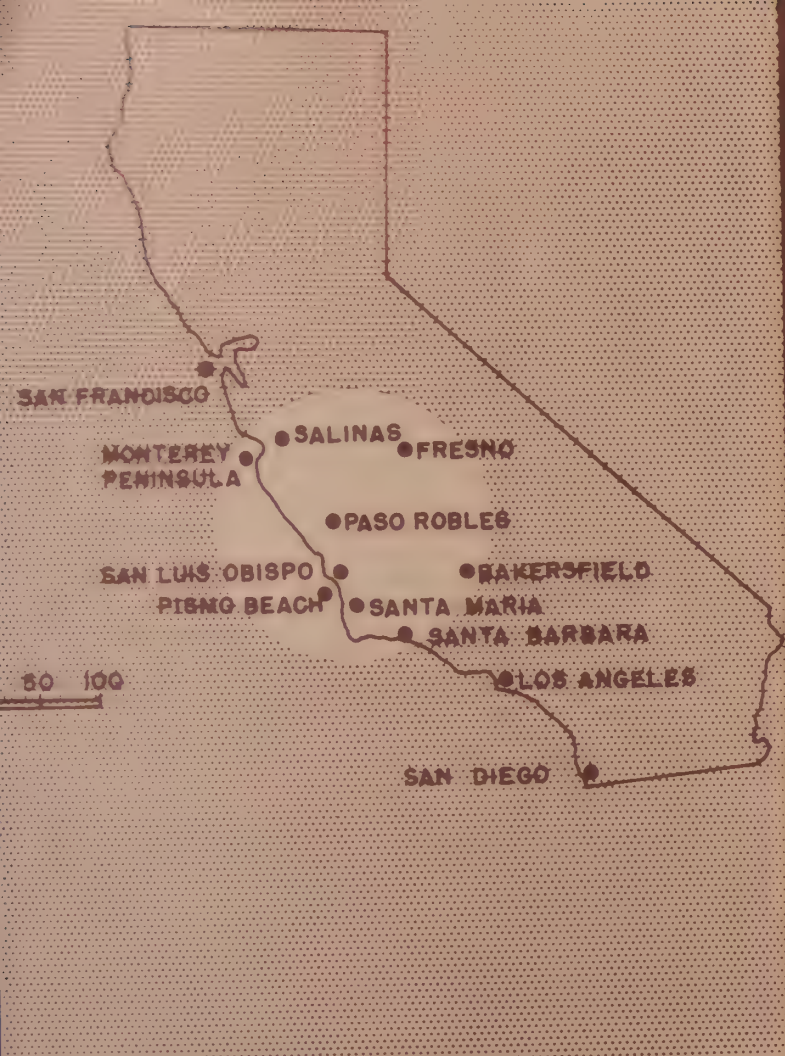
The experience of Salinas should be especially noted. Salinas, whose population is double that of San Luis Obispo, recently completed some intensive studies for a "Civic Auditorium". Proposals by a citizens' study group and two major architectural firms recommended that an auditorium be built as a first increment of a complex which would ultimately include separate structures for conventions and community recreation. At this writing, Salinas has set aside their plans for a new structure and are working to convert a local armory into a multi-purpose facility. The armory's central location played an important role in this decision.

Convention Bureau staff members believe voters should "prime the pump" by voting bonds to construct convention facilities.

A wide range in physical plant was noted during this research, and a valid assessment of the effectiveness of convention operation could not be made. However, it was observed that the newest, most versatile and well maintained buildings with plenty of easily accessible parking had the edge in attracting conventions. Measurements of operation effectiveness are to a degree dependent upon the type of convention facility, but more directly, they bear on the ability and personality of the facility management and staff.

Survey Of Eight Central California Cities

CITY	FACILITY	POPULATION (METRO. AREA)	SITUATION
BAKERSFIELD	CIVIC AUDITORIUM	188,750	Recently constructed (1962) at a cost of approximately \$5,000,000.00. Maximum capacity 7,250.
EL PASO DE ROBLES	SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS CIVIC AUDITORIUM	7,375	No proposals
FRESNO	CIVIC CENTER	200,000	Recently constructed (1966) at a cost of approximately \$8,000,000.00. Maximum capacity 7,500.
MONTEREY PENINSULA CITIES	MONTEREY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS ASILOMAR MARK THOMAS INN HOLIDAY INN	65,000	State owned Asilomar conference center very active. Adaptation of fairgrounds and private enterprise facilities have negated the need for convention center per se.
PISMO BEACH	VETERANS MEMORIAL	5,700	No proposals
SALINAS	HYATT HOUSE	52,207	Civic auditorium planned, but plans set aside in favor of converting local armory into a multi-purpose facility.
SANTA BARBARA	EARL WARREN PARK	138,000	Earl Warren Park capacity 5,000. Several large hotels and motels offer limited facilities, notably the Santa Barbara Biltmore and the Mira Mar.
SANTA MARIA	SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS	33,000	Convention hall recently constructed (1966) on fairgrounds at a cost of approximately \$350,000.00; maximum capacity 1,800. Other fairgrounds facilities previously existed.



SOURCES OF INFORMATION

BILL ADAMS, MANAGER, CONVENTION BUREAU
GREATER BAKERSFIELD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

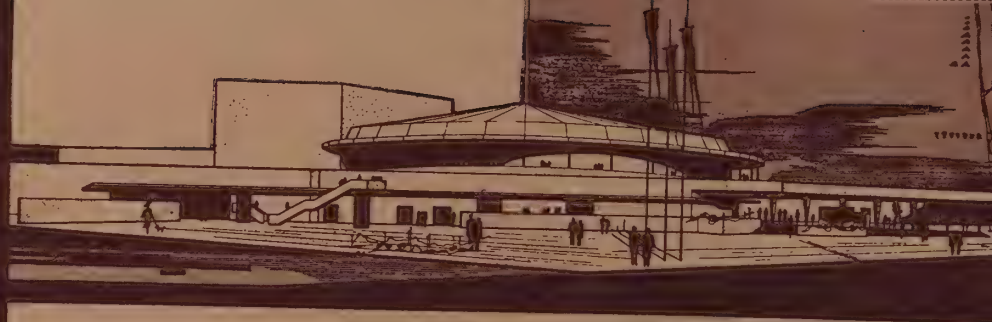
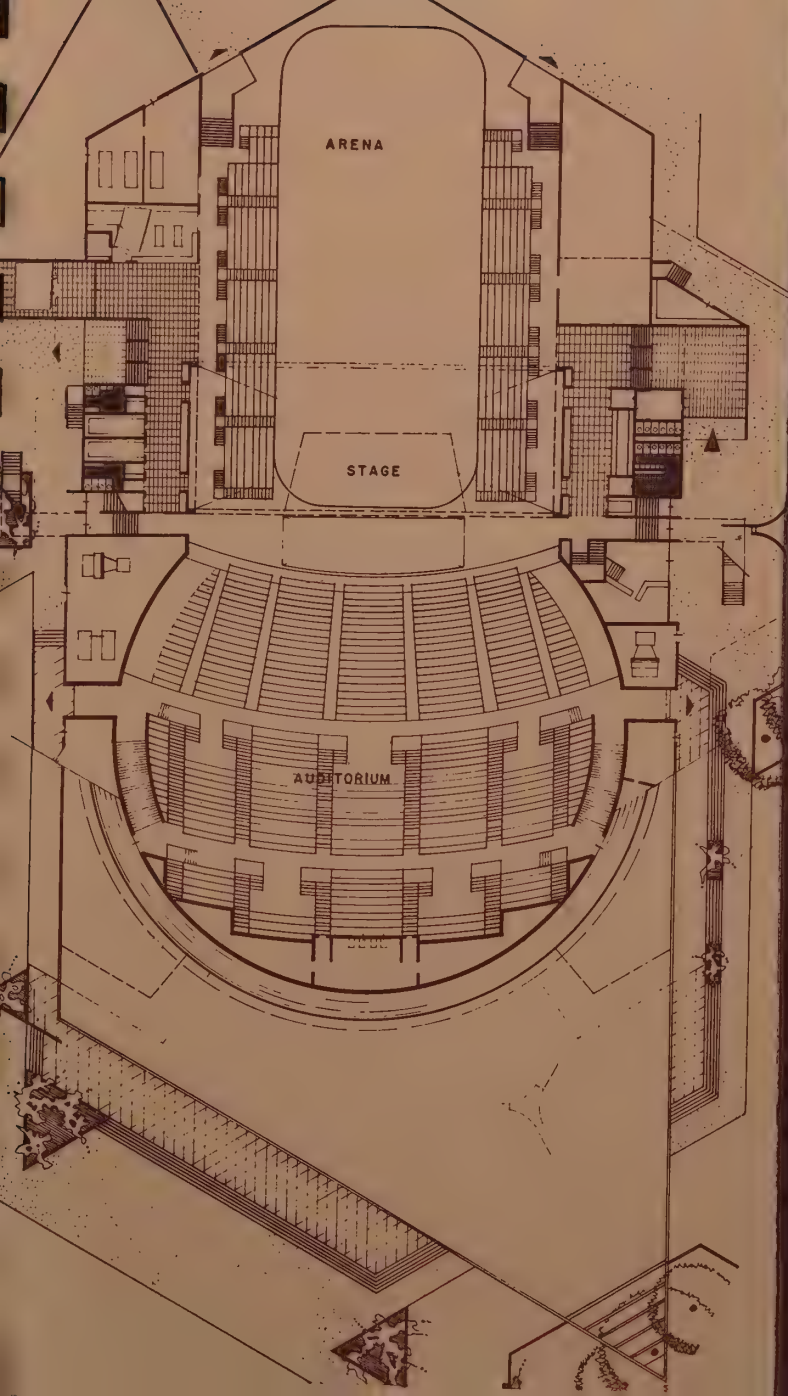
HERMAN W. RIESE, ASSISTANT MANAGER
CIVIC AUDITORIUM

E. L. ARMSTRONG, C.P.E., ASSOC. BROKER
WARDE D. WATSON REALTY COMPANY

HERMAN WONG, ASSOCIATE PLANNER
BAKERSFIELD PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MAP OF Metropolitan **BAKERSFIELD**





BAKERSFIELD CIVIC AUDITORIUM

ARENA SEATING CAPACITY 3,200; IDEALLY SUITED FOR ICE SKATING, MAJOR INDOOR SPORTING EVENTS, EXHIBITIONS (186 BOOTHS - 8' x 8'), BANQUET SEATING FOR 1,860.

CONCERT HALL SEATING CAPACITY 3,040; PROSCENIUM STAGE, FULLY AIR-CONDITIONED. ARENA AND CONCERT HALL CAN BE USED FOR ONE ASSEMBLY SEATING 7,250. TOTAL CAPACITY OF CIVIC AUDITORIUM IS 8,120.

BAKERSFIELD'S CHARACTERISTICS

CLIMATE COOL WINTERS AND HOT SUMMERS, WARM SUMMER EVENINGS.

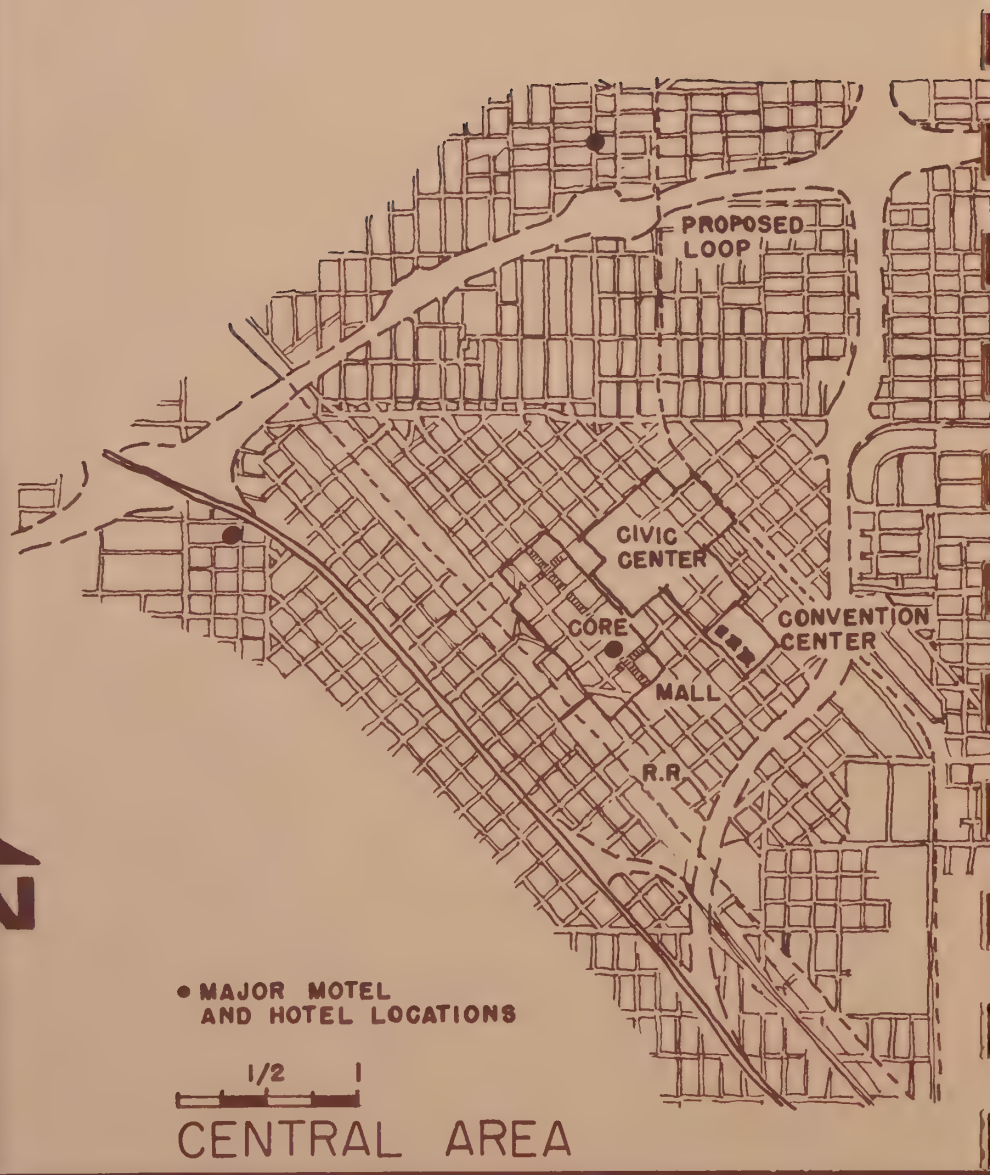
RECREATION NORMAL RANGE OF SPECTATOR SPORTS AND RECREATION FACILITIES INCLUDING GOLF, BOATING, CAMPING.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES KERN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA, ART ASSOCIATIONS, COMMUNITY THEATRE.

TRANSPORTATION INTERSTATE HIGHWAY CONNECTION; JET AIRPORT; TWO TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROADS; INTERSTATE BUS.

EVENING ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED.

ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS ADEQUATE IN NUMBER, BUT NO CENTRAL HEADQUARTERS FACILITY.



FRESNO CONVENTION CENTER

THEATER SEATING CAPACITY 2,360 CONTINENTAL STYLE;
PROSCENIUM STAGE WITH FULL FLY GALLERY.

EXHIBITION HALL 32,000 SQUARE FEET; 165 - 10' x 10' BOOTHS;
BANQUET CAPACITY 3,200; THEATER STYLE SEATING FOR
4,580; CAN BE DIVIDED INTO 14 MEETING ROOMS.

ARENA ARENA FLOOR SPACE 27,000 SQUARE FEET; BASKETBALL
SEATING: 6,467; WRESTLING: 6,327; ICE HOCKEY: 5,800;
CIRCUS: 5,400; CONVENTION ASSEMBLIES: 6,399.

FRESNO'S CHARACTERISTICS

CLIMATE COOL WINTERS AND HOT SUMMERS, WARM SUMMER EVENINGS.

RECREATION NORMAL RANGE OF SPECTATOR SPORTS AND RECREATION
FACILITIES. NATIONAL PARKS ARE NEARBY.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES FRESNO ARTS CENTER, PHILHARMONIC,
FINE ARTS FESTIVAL, MUSEUM, HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

TRANSPORTATION INTERSTATE HIGHWAY CONNECTION; JET AIRPORT;
TWO TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROADS; INTERSTATE BUS.

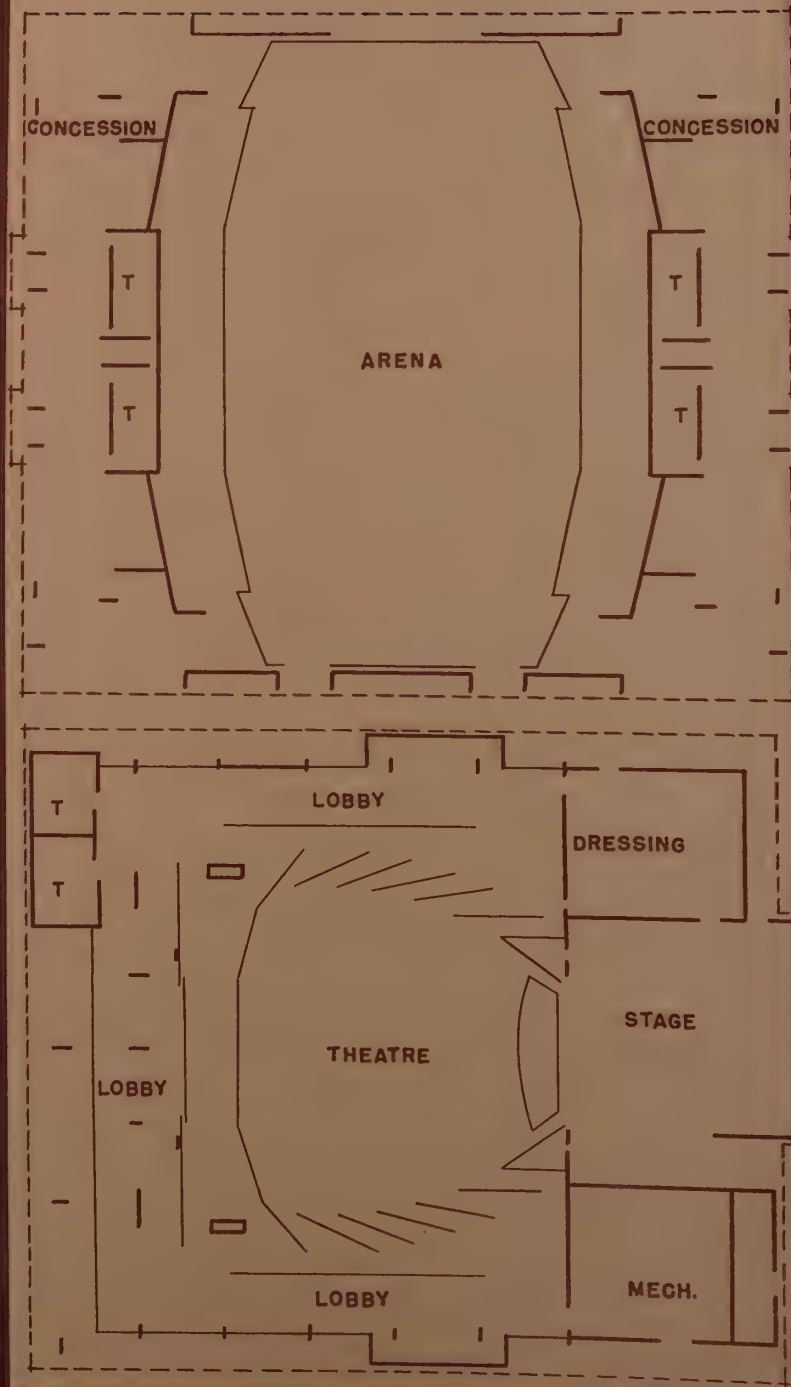
EVENING ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED.

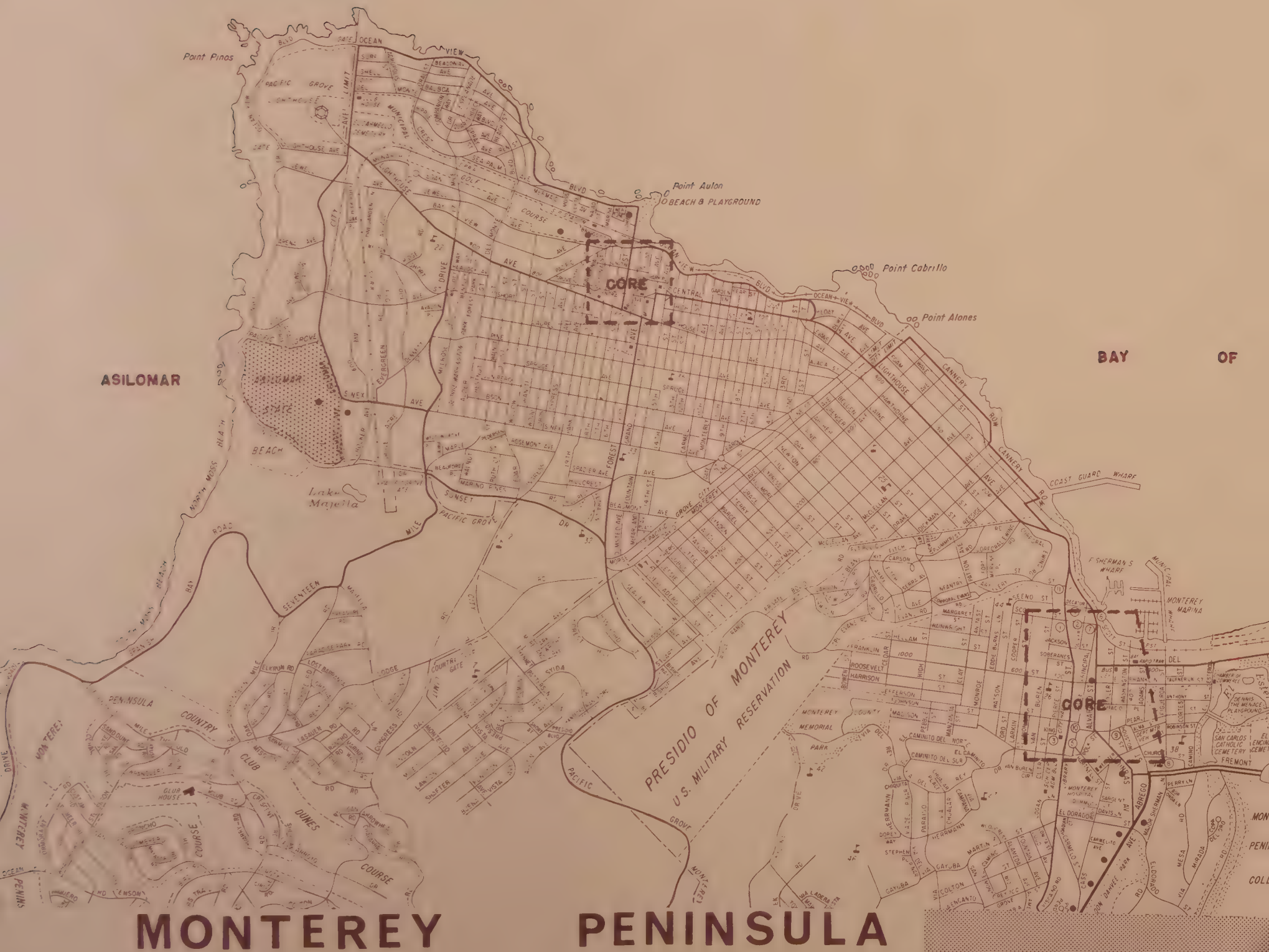
ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS CONVENTION HOTEL NEARBY

SPECIAL FEATURES THE FRESNO MALL

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

DOUGLAS S. WEEKS, SALES MANAGER
HUGHSON AND SWETT, REALTORS
ROBERT A. SCHOETTLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FRESNO CONVENTION BUREAU
ROBERT DYER, PLANNING ASSOCIATE, ADV. PLANNING SECT.
FRESNO PLANNING DEPARTMENT





MONTEREY

PENINSULA

ASILOMAR CONFERENCE GROUNDS: STATE OWNED, LEASED TO CITY OF PACIFIC GROVE AND SUB-LEASED TO A PRIVATE CORPORATION. TOTAL CAPACITY FOR CONVENTION: 3,000; LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR 688. CAFETERIA STYLE MEAL SERVICE CAN QUICKLY HANDLE ALL CONFERENCES ON THE GROUNDS.

MONTEREY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS: ARENA FLOOR SEATS 7,000; BANQUET ACCOMMODATIONS FOR 900. MOTELS ARE ADJACENT TO GROUNDS. ALL BUILDINGS ARE SUITABLE FOR EXHIBITION.

MARK THOMAS INN: 140 ROOMS WITH 8 MEETING
ROOMS WITH A MAXIMUM CAPACITY OF 425.

CLIMATE WARM WINTERS, COOL SUMMER DAYS AND NIGHTS.

RECREATION EXCELLENT VARIETY OF SPECTATOR AND PARTICIPANT SPORTS.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES VERY HIGH LEVEL OF
ACHIEVEMENTS IN ART, MUSIC AND DRAMA.

TRANSPORTATION STATE HIGHWAY CONNECTION TO
INTERSTATE SYSTEM, FEEDER AIRPORT,
INTERSTATE BUS.

EVENING ENTERTAINMENT MANY FINE FACILITIES.

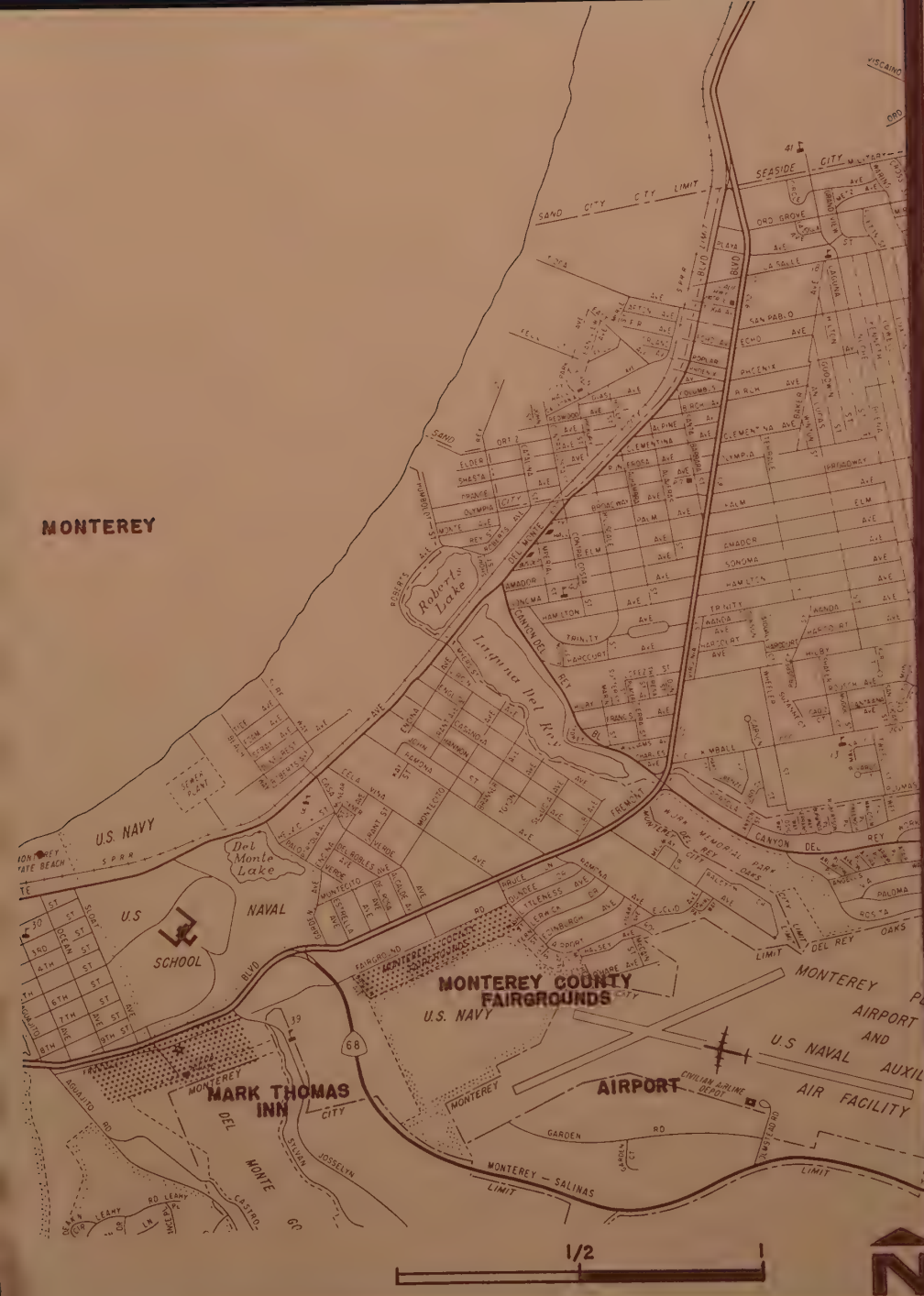
ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS 4,000 UNITS AVAILABLE AT
A VARIETY OF PRICES.

SPECIAL FEATURE THE MONTEREY PENINSULA
ENJOYS A NATIONAL REPUTATION AS A
HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND VACATION
CENTER. THIS REPUTATION IS WELL
FOUNDED.

MANLY DOUGLASS, C.M.B.

PENINSULA REALTY COMPANY
PACIFIC GROVE

JAN ROBERTSON, COORDINATOR
VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU
MONTEREY PENINSULA CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE



PISMO BEACH CONVENTION FACILITIES

PISMO BEACH HAS NO FACILITY WHICH IS USED SPECIFICALLY FOR CONVENTIONS. THE COUNTY OWNED AND MANAGED VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING WILL SEAT 600 AND CARE FOR A CATERED BANQUET FOR 400.

PISMO BEACH 'S CHARACTERISTICS

CLIMATE COOL WINTERS, WARM SUMMERS WITH COOL EVENINGS. OCCASSIONAL FOG.

RECREATION LIMITED EXCEPT FOR OCEAN ORIENTED SPORTS. NOTED FOR GLAM DIGGING.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES NORMAL FOR COMMUNITY OF 5,700 POPULATION.

TRANSPORTATION INTERSTATE HIGHWAY CONNECTION, INTERSTATE BUS, COUNTY SMALL CRAFT AIRPORT 10 MINUTES AWAY, RAILROAD LINE PASSES THROUGH CITY WITHOUT STOP.

EVENING ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED.

ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS ADEQUATE TO SERVE CONVENTION OF 600, NO HEADQUARTERS HOTEL OR MOTEL.

SPECIAL FEATURE PICTURESQUE SEASCAPE.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

DR. A. J. MADSON, MANAGER

PISMO BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HENRY MEYERS, SECRETARY

PISMO BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BESSIE ESLICK, SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT

PISMO BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



• MOTEL LOCATIONS

PISMO BEACH

EL PASO DE ROBLES



EL PASO DE ROBLES CONVENTION FACILITIES

PASO ROBLES HAS NO FACILITY WHICH IS USED SPECIFICALLY FOR CONVENTIONS. THE MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM SEATS 400 AND CAN SERVE 350 IN BANQUET STYLE. THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS BLEACHERS CAN HANDLE DAY CROWDS OF 3,000; PARKING FOR 1,000 AUTOMOBILES IS ADJACENT.

EL PASO DE ROBLES CHARACTERISTICS

CLIMATE HOT SUMMERS WITH WARM EVENINGS, COOL WINTERS.

RECREATION LIMITED LOCALLY; WATER SPORTS AT NACIMIENTO LAKE AND OCEAN 20 MINUTES AWAY BY AUTOMOBILE.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES NORMAL FOR COMMUNITY OF 7,400 POPULATION.

TRANSPORTATION INTERSTATE HIGHWAY CONNECTION; TURBO-JET FEEDER AIRPORT; INTERSTATE BUS; RAILROAD.

EVENING ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED.

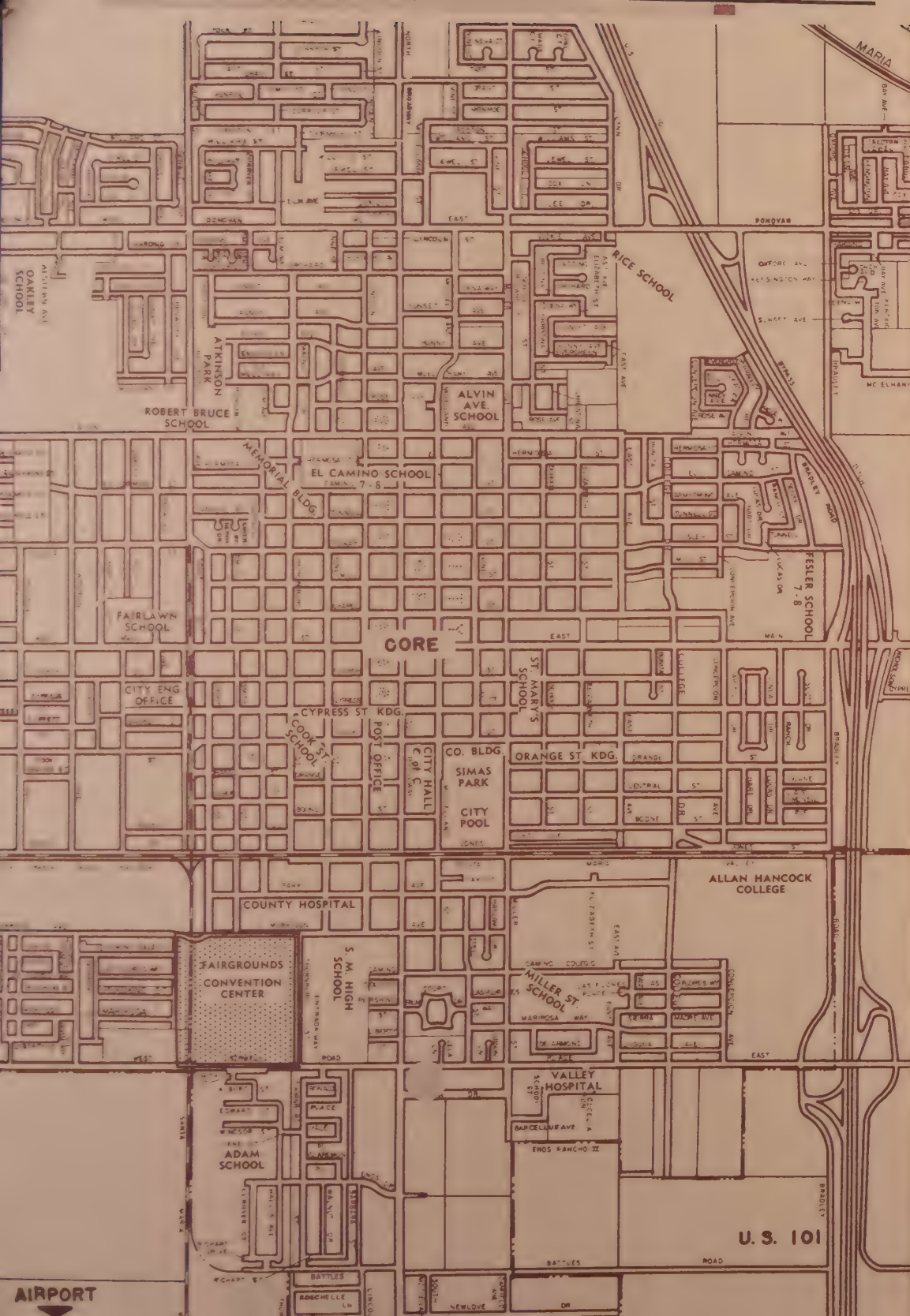
ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS ADEQUATE TO SERVE CONVENTION OF 300; NO HEAD-QUARTERS HOTEL OR MOTEL.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

JOYCE ROBINSON, SECRETARY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

EMMA LOU BROWN, MANAGER
CIVIC AUDITORIUM

LARRY LEWIN, MANAGER
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS



SANTA MARIA CONVENTION HALL

FACILITY LOCATED AT THE SANTA MARIA FAIRGROUNDS (SANTA BARBARA COUNTY), WITH THE CONVENTION HALL ITSELF CONTAINING 36,000 SQUARE FEET OF MULTI-PURPOSE SPACE. THE FAIRGROUNDS RODEO ARENA AND EXHIBIT BUILDINGS CAN BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HALL.

SANTA MARIA'S CHARACTERISTICS

CLIMATE WARM SUMMERS WITH COOL EVENINGS, COOL WINTERS.

RECREATION LIMITED LOCALLY, OCEAN SPORTS 20 MINUTES DRIVE.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES NORMAL FOR COMMUNITY OF 32,000 POPULATION.

TRANSPORTATION INTERSTATE HIGHWAY CONNECTION, TURBO-JET FEEDER AIRPORT, INTERSTATE BUS.

EVENING ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED.

ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS ADEQUATE TO SERVE CONVENTION OF 1500-1800; CONVENTION HOTEL AVAILABLE.

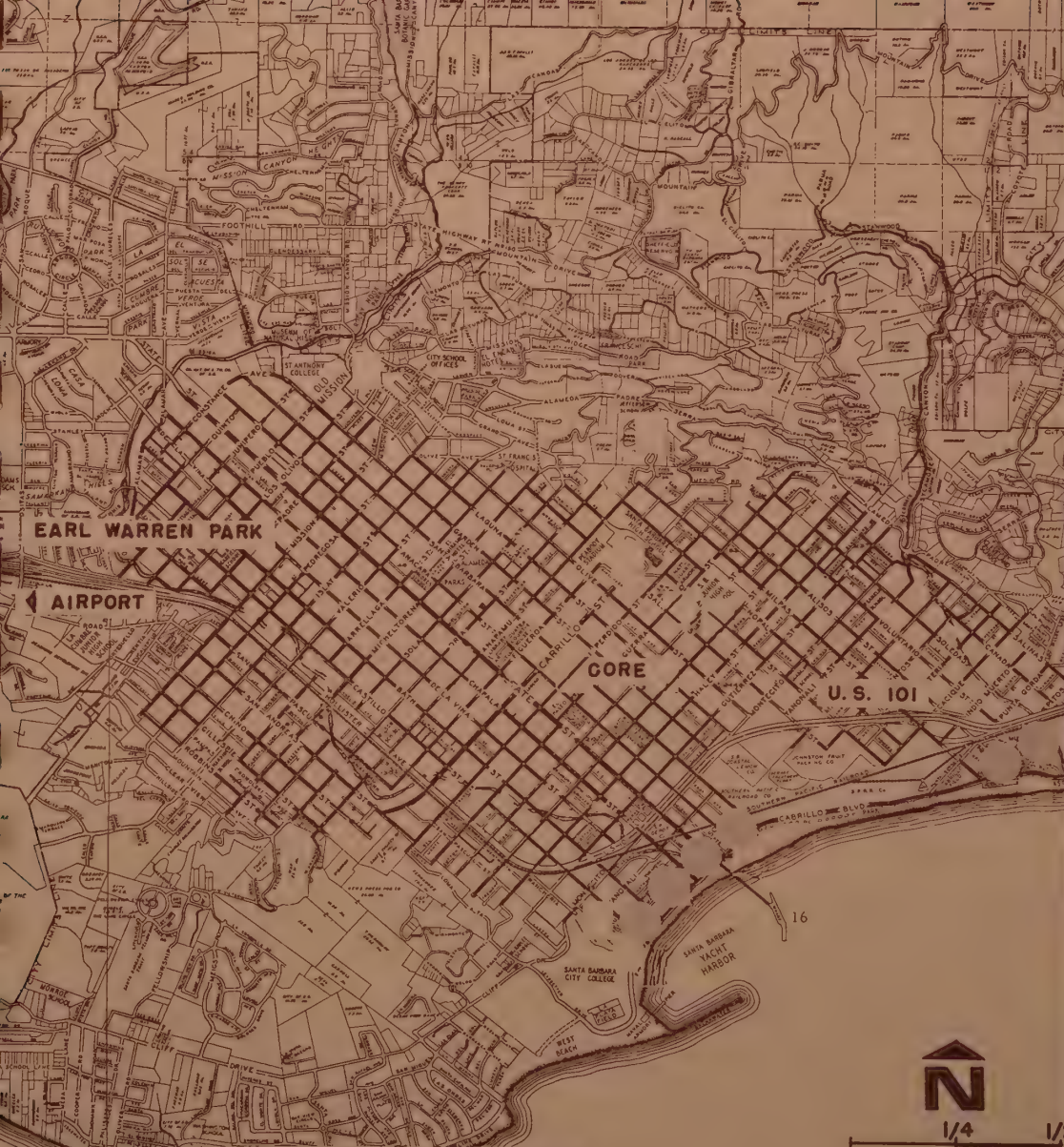
SOURCES OF INFORMATION

JEAN W. ABRAHAM, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, CITY OF SANTA MARIA
 TOM W. HART, DIRECTOR OF PUBLICITY, PROMOTIONS, AND CONVENTIONS
 SANTA MARIA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
 ROBERT BAKER, CONVENTION CENTER MANAGER, COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS, SANTA MARIA



LOCATION OF HEADQUARTERS HOTEL

SANTA MARIA



LOCATION OF MAJOR HOTELS AND MOTELS
IN ADDITION TO THOSE IN CORE AREA

SANTA BARBARA



SANTA BARBARA CONVENTION FACILITIES

SANTA BARBARA HAS NO FACILITY WHICH IS USED SPECIFICALLY FOR CONVENTIONS. THE FACILITIES AT THE STATE-OWNED EARL WARREN PARK ACCOMMODATE THE LARGEST GROUPS. THE FLOWER EXHIBITION BUILDING HAS A CAPACITY OF 2,000 FOR BANQUETS OR MEETINGS. THE ARENA HAS A CAPACITY OF 3,000 OR IT CAN BE SUBDIVIDED INTO SIX MEETING HALLS. GROUPS OF 125 - 700 CAN FIND FACILITIES AT SEVERAL HOTELS AND MOTELS.

SANTA BARBARA'S CHARACTERISTICS

CLIMATE EXCELLENT ALL YEAR.

RECREATION NORMAL RANGE OF SPECTATOR SPORTS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS UPON WATER ORIENTED ACTIVITIES.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES GREATER INTEREST IN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES THAN NORMALLY FOUND IN A COMMUNITY OF LESS THAN 100,000. VERY HIGH LEVEL.

TRANSPORTATION INTERSTATE HIGHWAY CONNECTION, JET AIRPORT, PASSENGER RAILROAD, INTERSTATE BUS, YACHT HARBOR.

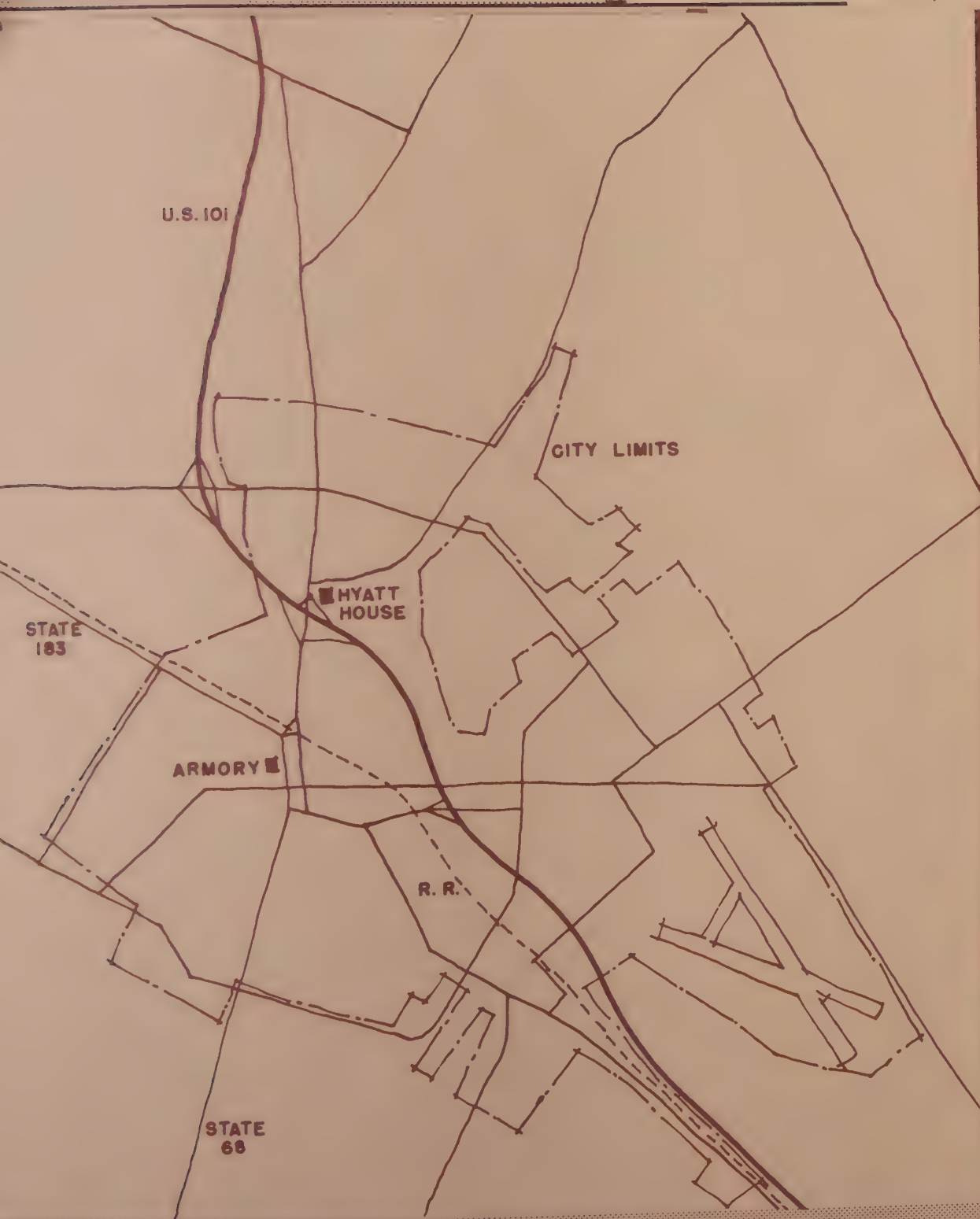
EVENING ENTERTAINMENT SOMEWHAT REFINED.

ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS MORE THAN ADEQUATE IN NUMBER; NOT ONE HOTEL OR MOTEL CAN WORK AS HEADQUARTERS.

SPECIAL FEATURES UNIQUE SPANISH ATMOSPHERE; FINE NATURAL SETTING.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

GRACE DIVELY, MANAGER
CONFERENCE AND CONVENTION BUREAU



SALINAS CONVENTION FACILITIES

SALINAS HAS NO FACILITY WHICH IS USED SPECIFICALLY FOR CONVENTIONS. THE HYATT HOUSE CAN SUPPLY SPACE FOR 400 IN CONVENTION OR BANQUET SEATING. THE CITY OF SALINAS IS PLANNING TO ACQUIRE THE NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY AND CONVERT IT TO A MULTI-PURPOSE FACILITY IN WHICH CONVENTIONS MAY BE HELD.

SALINAS' CHARACTERISTICS

CLIMATE COOL SUMMERS AND WINTERS

RECREATION LIMITED LOCALLY

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES NORMAL FOR CITY OF 53,000 POPULATION.

TRANSPORTATION INTERSTATE HIGHWAY CONNECTION, TURBO-JET FEEDER LINE AIRPORT, PASSENGER RAILROAD, INTERSTATE BUS.

EVENING ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED.

ROOM ACCOMMODATIONS ADEQUATE TO SERVE CONVENTION GROUPS UNDER 400. HYATT HOUSE SERVES AS HEAD-QUARTERS MOTEL.

SPECIAL FEATURE PROXIMITY TO MONTEREY PENINSULA SEASIDE ACTIVITIES.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

ROYCE DAVIDSON, MANAGER, VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU
SALINAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



SALINAS





SURVEY OF THE CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO



The character of a city--that is its physical makeup and its appearance, and the attitudes of its people have very real impact on the success a city will have as a convention city. In order to make an assessment of San Luis Obispo, four surveys were undertaken.

The first survey delved into the physical characteristics of San Luis Obispo: its climate; its educational and cultural facilities; its transportation facilities; its points of historical interest; its retail shopping center; its motels, hotels, and fine restaurants; and the character of the surrounding area.

In a second survey, interviews were held with personnel of 14 of San Luis Obispo's 31 hotels and motels to learn first-hand the type of facilities present, and to sample the reaction of the operators of these establishments relative to conventions.

Two surveys were conducted to test community reactions and attitudes as expressed (1) by community leaders, and (2) by the business and professional segment of the city. The latter survey also attempted to determine the amount of support which might be received from business and professional people in promoting conventions for San Luis Obispo from amongst the organizations to which they belong.

Brief introductions and analyses are to be found at the beginning of each section.

a n a l y s i s

San Luis Obispo has the physical characteristics which could make it an attractive convention city. It does have, at the moment, several serious liabilities.

The city has no convention center per se; it does have one facility, the Veterans Memorial Building, which is used for convention purposes, but not nearly to the degree that it could be used. Complaints have been registered regarding the building itself, but there is reason to believe that comparatively inexpensive modifications and/or remodeling could overcome shortcomings.

Approximately 1650 motel/hotel units exist which adequately serve medium-sized conventions; however, these accommodations are scattered in four principal areas of the city, and the city is without public conveyance except for taxis.

The city is not directly served by commercial airline which is a very serious defect in the eyes of many organizations.

There are few "things to do" in San Luis Obispo proper. Many of the activity areas lay outside the city, are not extensively developed, and cannot be reached by public conveyance. The downtown retail core does not offer a distinctive shopping experience for outsiders. Historical and cultural activities are still underdeveloped.

That segment of the city that most directly deals with conventioners--the hotel and motel segment, is not of one mind about the merits of a convention center. Some feel it would be an advantage to have a center now; some say tourism should be promoted first and that the city should make better use of the convention facilities it now has before building a new facility. All would like to see stronger promotion of the city utilizing bed tax monies.

Attitudes within the community are also mixed. Several community leaders are skeptical of the success a convention center would have at this time. All recognize the benefits that new dollars brought in by conventions could mean for the city, and most were aware of the city's limitations to serve conventioners. Most agreed that if the city had to build a facility, it would have to undertake a first-rate public relations program to convince the citizenry of need.

Business and professional people expressed interest and indicated a willingness to work to get their respective organizations to consider San Luis Obispo as a meeting place. Most felt a convention center would be helpful to the city's economy. This segment also expressed concern with whether San Luis Obispo was "ready", noting that "things to do" in the city are very limited.

SURVEY OF THE CONVENTIONS AND MEETINGS HELD IN THE CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO TO DATE

Conventions held in San Luis Obispo to date fall into two major categories: (1) those conventions which use the various meeting facilities within the city; and (2) those which use the meeting facilities of Cal Poly. Only those organizations whose meetings are educational in nature may use the Cal Poly facilities. Many organizations which use campus meeting facilities, however, choose to stay in off-campus housing and/or take their meals in the city.

Unfortunately, the only records available from the Chamber of Commerce listing conventions which use meeting facilities of the city, commence with 1965 and run to date:

March	1965	Steam Automobile Association Convention
April		National Conference of United Volunteer Services
April		San Luis Obispo Lighting Seminar
September		Central Coast Square Dance Convention
September		American Legion District Convention
September		Association of Buddhist Women
November		Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Conference
November		District Rotary Convention
November		Tri-County DeMolay Convention
January	1966	State Association of County Assessors, South. Sect.
February		San Luis Obispo County Planning Conference
August		Northern California State Babe Ruth League Tournament
September		Central Coast Square Dance Convention
October		Soroptimist District 11 Convention
October		First Annual Kennel Club Show
October		W. C. T. U. Convention
November		Veterans of World War I - Joint Conference American Legion Post #66 and V. F. W. Post #1766
February	1967	Business and Professional Women's Winter Conference
March		San Luis Obispo County Blind Association
April		Southern Typographical Conference
April		California Bankers Association
May		Dale Carnegie Alumni Association

Cal Poly records the following meetings held on the campus during the last five years:
(Note: these meetings do not involve college credit)

MONTH	ORGANIZATION	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	ATTEND.
January	Calif. Assoc. of Refrig. Service Engineers Society	x	x	x	x	x	500
Frebruary	Calif. Grain and Feed Dealers Association		x	x		x	150
March	California Grange Youth Conf.	x	x	x	x	x	75
May	F. F. A. Convention	x	x	x	x	x	600
May	F. F. A. State-wide Judging Contests	x	x	x	x	x	300
June	Nurserymen's Refresher Course	x	x	x	x	x	250
June	Agriculture Teachers Skills Week	x	x	x	x	x	150
June	Apprenticeship Plumbing State-wide Contests	x	x	x	x	x	100
June	Calif. Agriculture Teachers Association	x	x	x	x	x	600
June	American Institute of Floral Designers					S*	100
July	Calif. Farm Bureau Federation Board Meetings	x	x	x	x	S	40
July	Calif. Farm Bureau Federation Staff Institute	x	x	x	x	S	175
July	Calif. Chapter of National Institute of Farm and Land Brokers	x	x	x	x	S	200
August	California Field Ironworkers Apprenticeship Training			x	x	S	50
August	Society of California Accountants			x	x	S	150
November	Audubon Society					S	100

Note: In addition to the meetings listed above, college credit workshops have been held in the summers for a number of years. The most notable of these is the Physical Education Workshop which runs for two weeks and attracts about 600 participants.

*S = Scheduled

SURVEY OF THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO





A convention city is seldom selected by an organization on whim. Rather, detailed assessments of the characteristics of several cities are usually made by individuals or committees designated with the responsibility of actually choosing the convention city or making considered recommendations to the body of their organizations.

Such assessments normally consider: location of city, accessibility, types of convention facilities available, off-hour activities, things to do for spouses, and climate conditions, as well as services offered by a city.

The data collected in this section presents a picture of the physical characteristics of San Luis Obispo.

analysis

San Luis Obispo is a potentially beautiful city with an ideal physical setting and a climate which permits a great variety of flowers, shrubs, and trees to be grown in profusion. However, the city's streets--especially those in the commercial sections--are neither distinctive nor unique, and they hold little appeal for tourists. Streets need to be visually improved, particularly those streets in the downtown and "motel row" areas. Clutter should be removed and the streets should be filled with floral color and trees to make them more attractive to tourists and citizens alike. The civic pride thus engendered would be good for tourism, convention attraction, and business.

Retail business would most likely improve with corresponding improvements in merchandising. Retailers should work to provide greater selection, larger stocks, and prices more competitive with nearby larger cities.

It is difficult for tourists to get to San Luis Obispo if they are not traveling by private automobile. Better scheduling of buses and trains would help improve this situation. Scheduling of a commercial air line into the local airport would be a great boost to the ability of the city to attract convention groups and tourists.

The historical, educational, recreational and cultural aspects of the city are abundant, but are either inaccessible or unattractive. They generally suffer from a lack of civic concern and they need "freshening"--more attractive and consistent signing and better advertising. Regular tours should be inaugurated. Local hotels and motels should be encouraged to include bus excursions to nearby cultural and recreational activities as part of their services.

Motel accommodations are of good quality and the Madonna Inn, of course, is unique. The city needs more restaurants of the good quality--medium price variety. Of the meeting halls available for possible convention use, the county owned and managed Veterans Memorial Building is best equipped. The variety of smaller halls available in the city has meant that the Memorial Building is seldom used for group meetings. Other cities interviewed would eye the Veterans Memorial as a "blessing" and would use it extensively. It is obviously an excellent choice for use as an interim convention center and merely needs publicity.

CLIMATE

LITERALLY SPRINGTIME THE YEAR AROUND, CLIMATE IS A PRIME SAN LUIS OBISPO RESOURCE.

PREDOMINANTLY DRY;
TOTAL RAINFALL OCCURS
BETWEEN DECEMBER AND
MAY.

300' ABOVE SEA LEVEL.

TEMPERATURE

PERIOD	MIN °	MAX °
JAN.	41.3	61.6
APR.	46.3	67.8
JULY	52.5	76.9
OCT.	50.5	70.1
YEAR AV.	47.8	70.1

RAINFALL (INCHES)

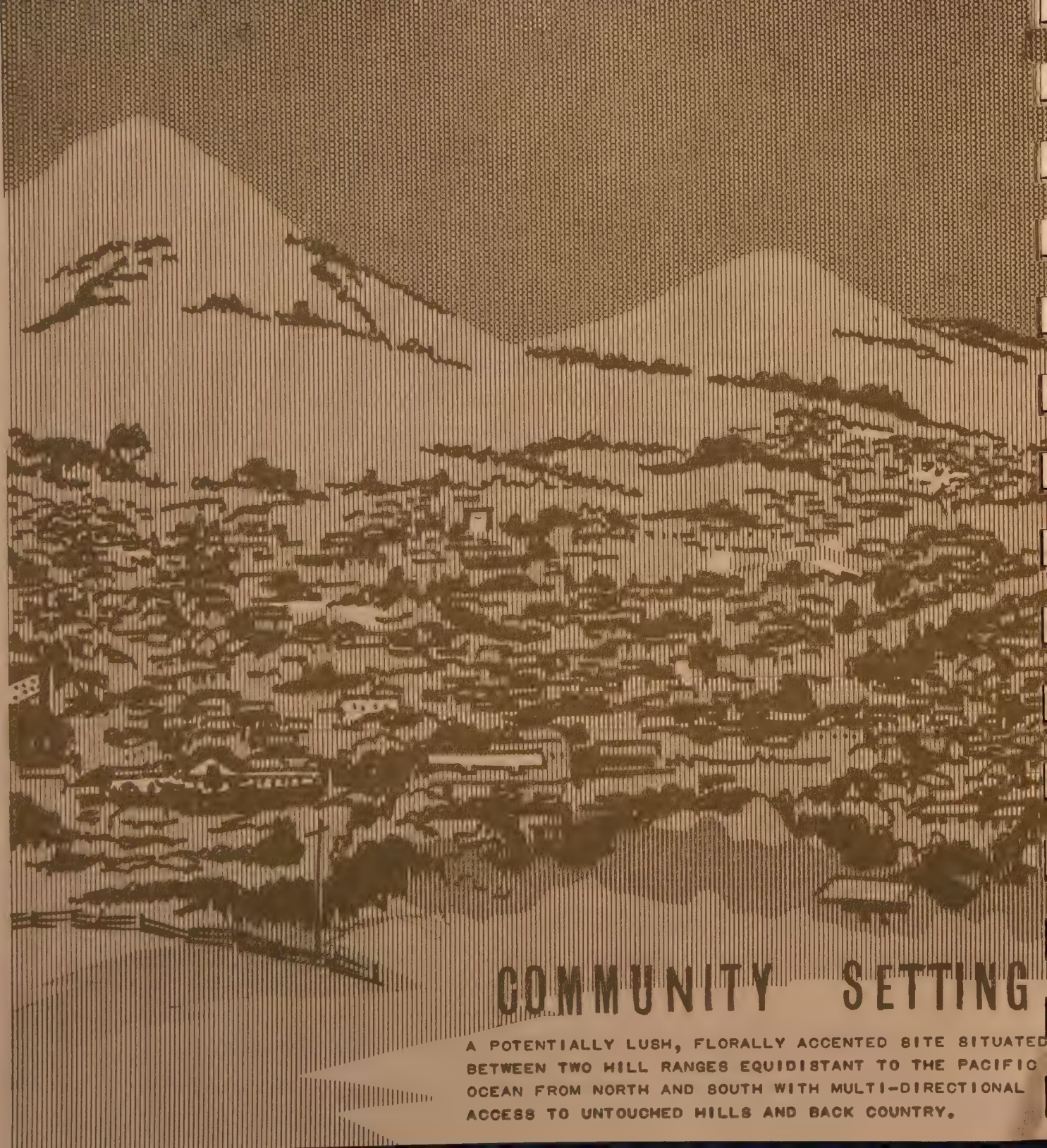
JANUARY	4.38
APRIL	1.60
JULY	.04
OCTOBER	.83
YEAR AVERAGE	22.44

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

50% AVERAGE

WIND

8 MILES PER HOUR MEAN



COMMUNITY SETTING

A POTENTIALLY LUSH, FLORALLY ACCENTED SITE SITUATED BETWEEN TWO HILL RANGES EQUIDISTANT TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN FROM NORTH AND SOUTH WITH MULTI-DIRECTIONAL ACCESS TO UNTOUCHED HILLS AND BACK COUNTRY.

TRANSPORTATION

SAN LUIS OBISPO

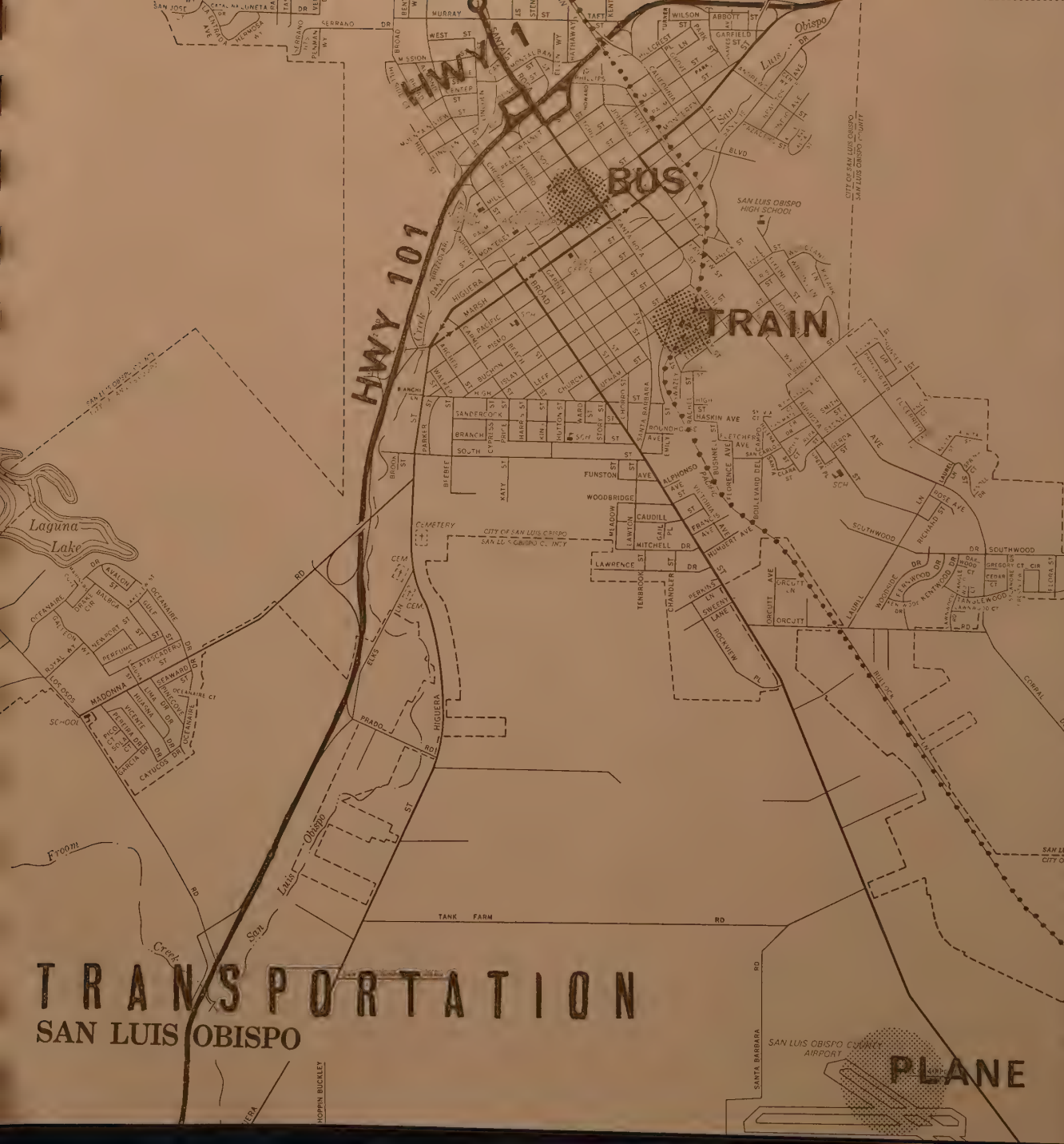
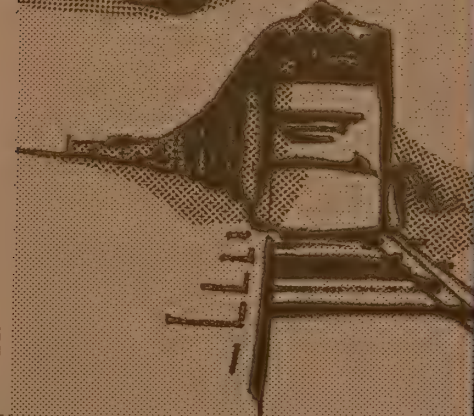
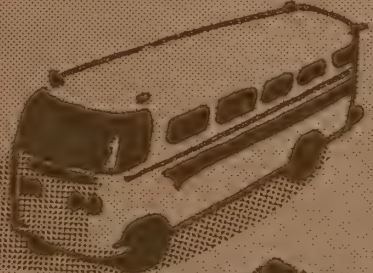
HOPKIN BUCKLEY

BUS

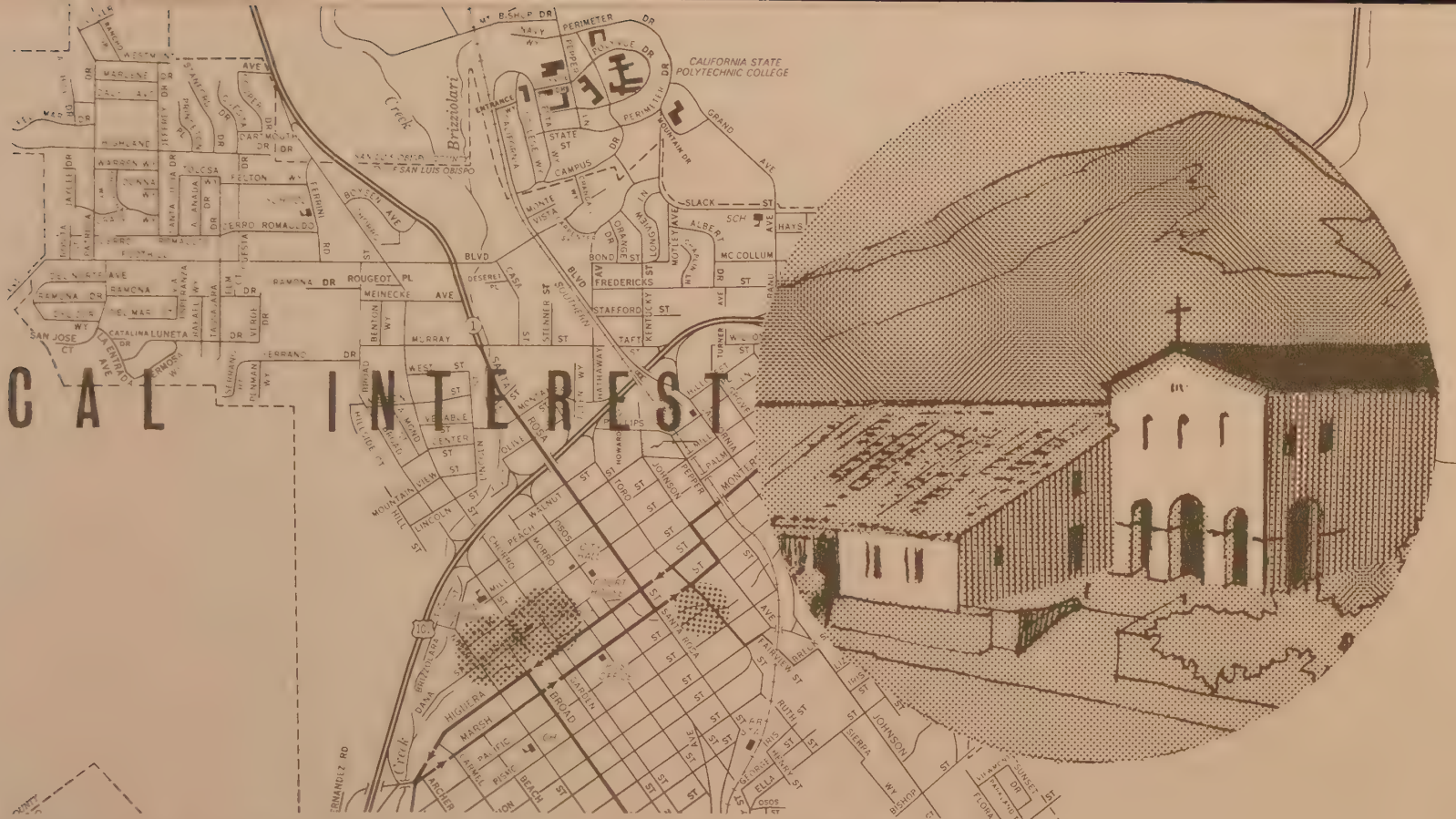
TRAIN

PLANE

GREYHOUND BUS SCHEDULES APPROXIMATELY 16 BUSES EACH DAY IN NORTH AND SOUTH DIRECTIONS. THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD SCHEDULES TWO PASSENGER TRAINS PER DAY IN EACH DIRECTION. NO COMMERCIAL AIRLINES LAND AT THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY AIRPORT. COMMERCIAL AIR CONNECTIONS ARE MADE AT EL PASO DE ROBLES OR SANTA MARIA, 35-40 MILES NORTH AND SOUTH RESPECTIVELY. THE PRIVATE AUTOMOBILE REMAINS THE BEST METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION, AND IN THIS REGARD, THE FREEWAY SYSTEM IS EXCELLENT.

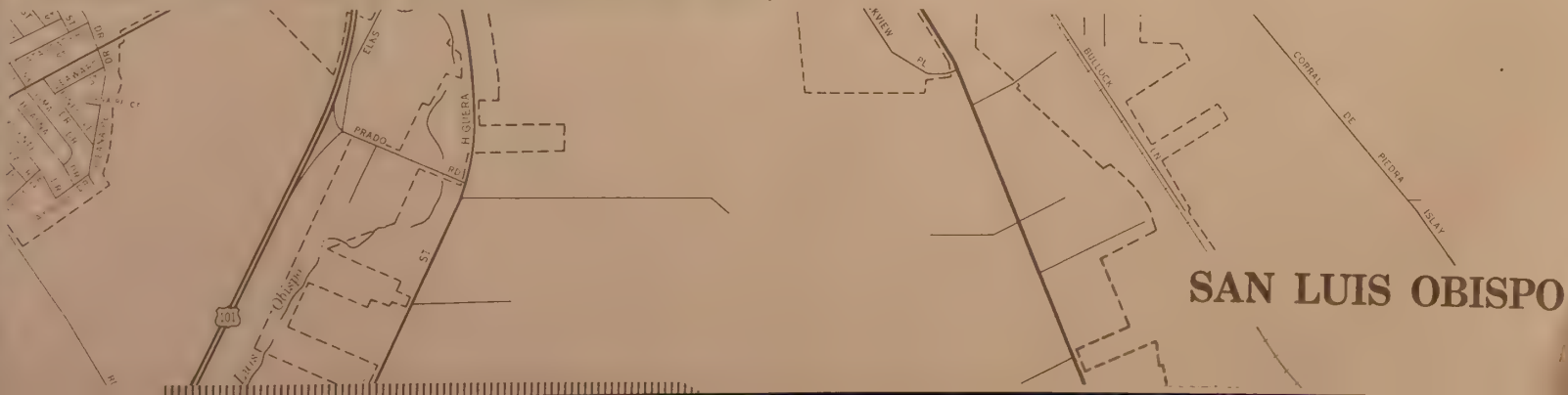
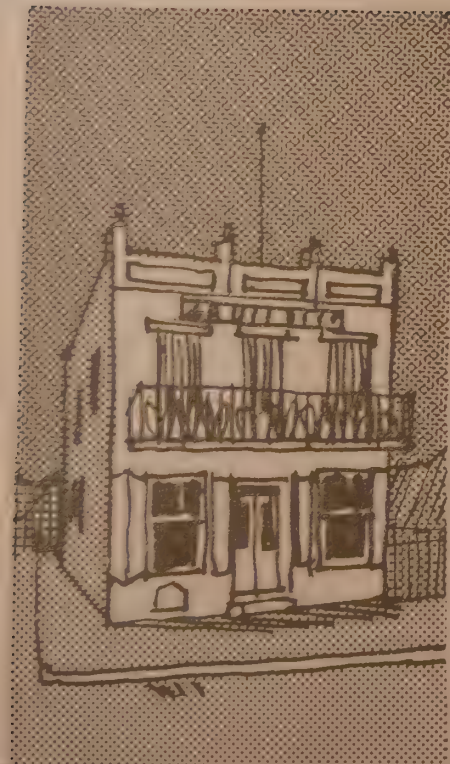


HISTORICAL INTEREST



FOR ITS SIZE, SAN LUIS OBISPO HAS MANY POINTS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST. THEY INCLUDE: THE MISSION SAN LUIS OBISPO DE TOLOSA AND MUSEUM, THE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM, THE DALLIDET ADOBE, THE AH LOUIS STORE, THE SINSHEIMER BROTHERS STORE, THE BAUER ADOBE AND ANNEX, THE KLUVER CIGAR FACTORY (NOW A RESTAURANT), AND SEVERAL PRIVATE ADOBE RESIDENCES.

OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS CAN BE FOUND: THE HEARST CASTLE STATE MONUMENT AT SAN SIMEON, THE DANA ADOBE AT NIPOMO, THE YORK MOUNTAIN AND PRESENTI WINERIES NEAR TEMPLETON, MISSION SAN MIGUEL ARCANGEL AT SAN MIGUEL, MISSION LA PURISIMA CONCEPCION NEAR LOMPOC, AND OTHER EASILY ACCESSIBLE POINTS. MOST OF THESE ATTRACTIONS ARE EITHER NOT MADE ATTRACTIVE OR OBVIOUS TO THE TOURIST OR CITIZEN OF THE AREA.



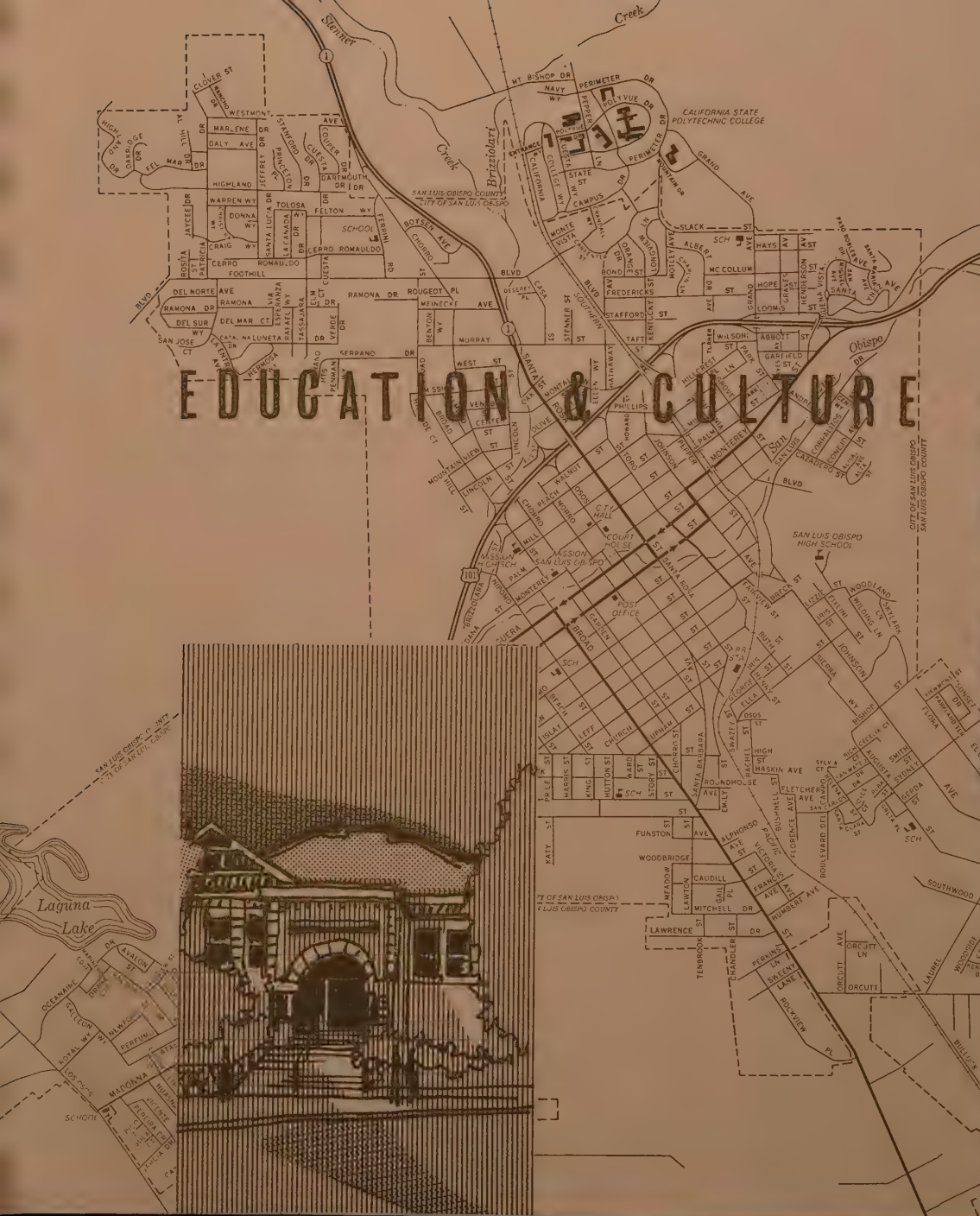
SAN LUIS OBISPO

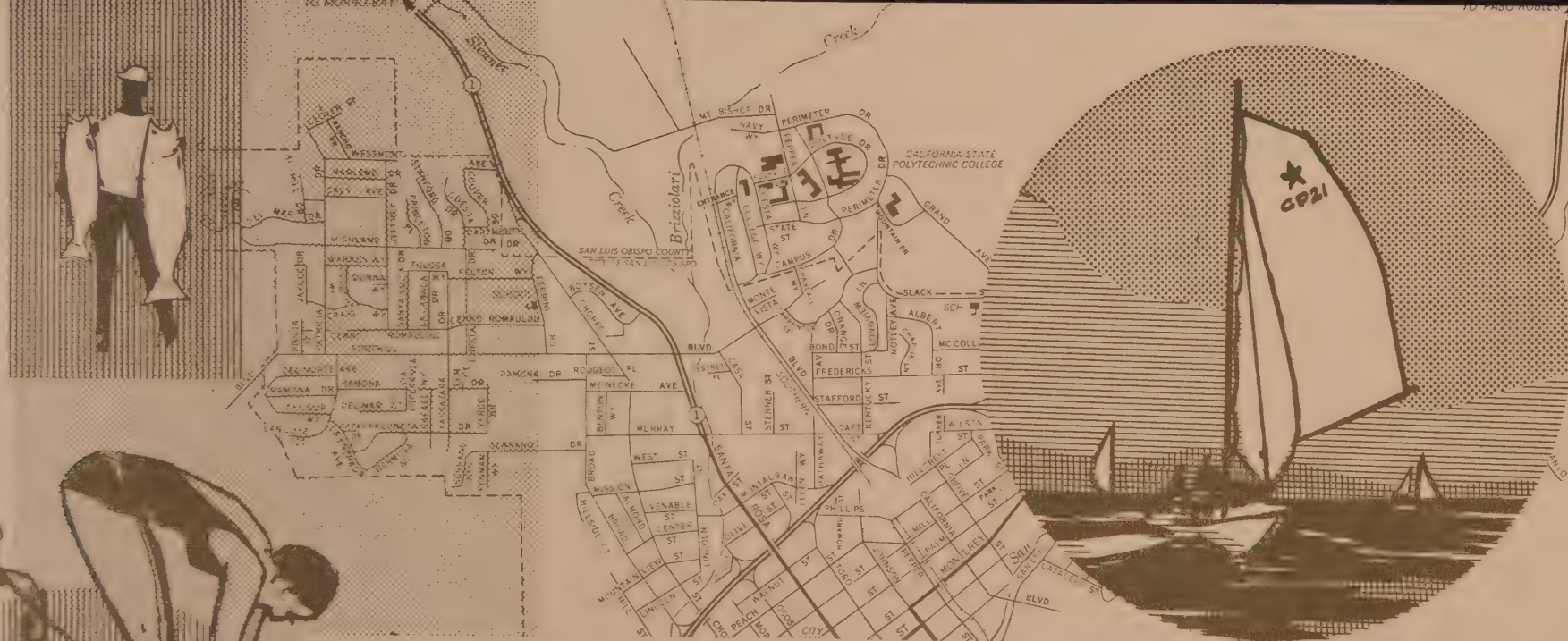
EDUCATION & CULTURE

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE AND CUESTA COLLEGE, TWO CONTINUALLY GROWING INSTITUTIONS, PREPARE THE CITY'S PRIME EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES. THEY PROMISE STRONG CONVENTION AND MEETING POTENTIAL. ASIDE FROM THE COLLEGES, THE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND THE CITY AND COUNTY LIBRARIES ARE THE ONLY ESTABLISHED CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SOURCES. THERE ARE NO ESTABLISHED ART GALLERIES. THE LITTLE THEATRE GROUP AND THE ART ASSOCIATION ARE BOTH TEMPORARILY HOUSED AND OFFER POOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGES.

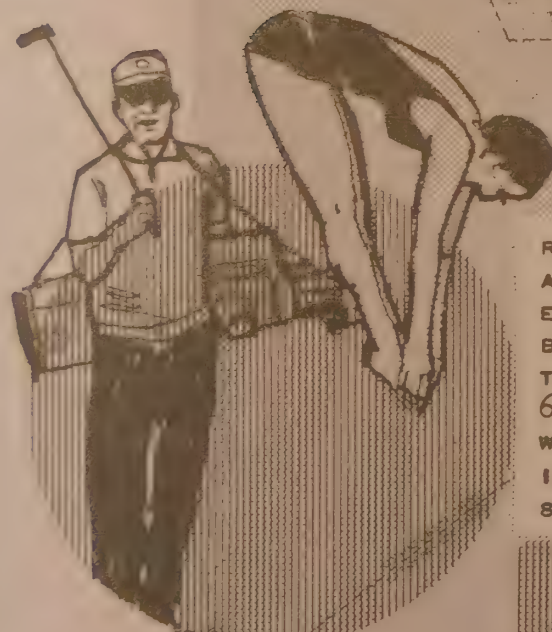


SAN LUIS OBISPO



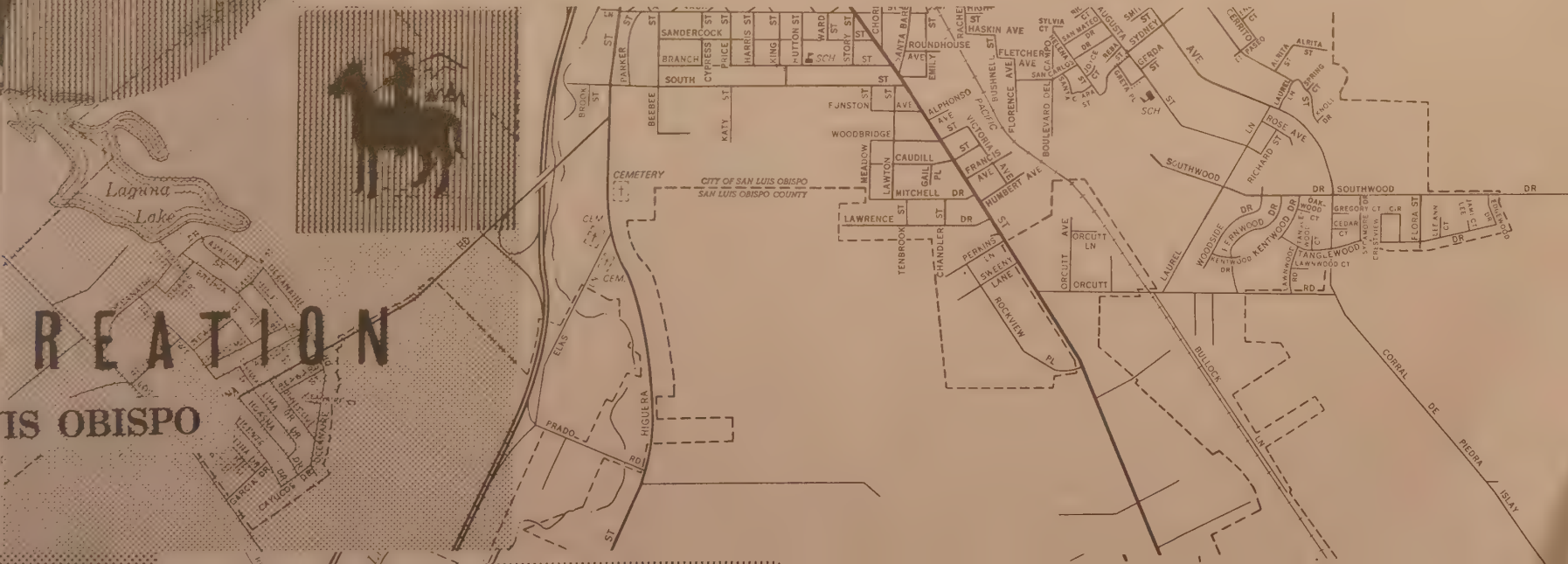


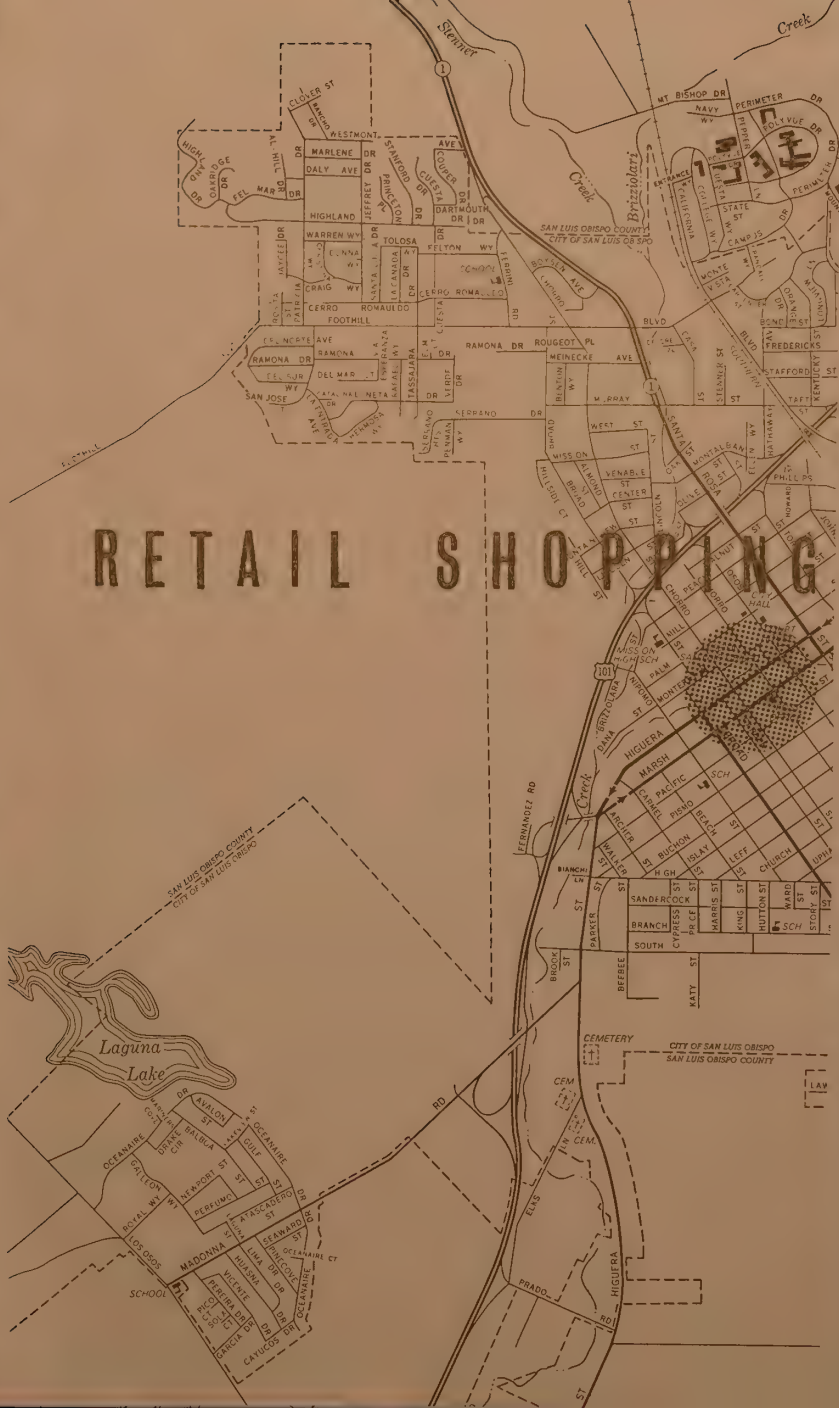
RECREATIONAL POSSIBILITIES IN SAN LUIS OBISPO ARE NUMEROUS, BUT NEARLY ALL OF THESE ARE TO BE FOUND OUTSIDE OF THE CITY LIMITS. THEY ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY AUTOMOBILE, HOWEVER. HEARST CASTLE CAN BE REACHED BY CHARTER BUS SERVICE, BUT IT IS THE ONLY ACTIVITY SPOT SO SERVICED. THE RECREATIONAL GAMUT INCLUDES 22 PUBLIC PARKS AND BEACHES, 4 LAKES, 6 PUBLIC GOLF COURSES, 2 PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS, DEEP SEA AND FRESH WATER FISHING, BOATING, RIDING, WATER SKIING, HUNTING, MOUNTAIN CLIMBING CAMPING, AND SIGHT-SEEING. AVILA BEACH, SO-CALLED THE SAFEST SWIMMING BEACH IN CALIFORNIA IS APPROXIMATELY 15 MINUTES AWAY.



RECREATION

SAN LUIS OBISPO

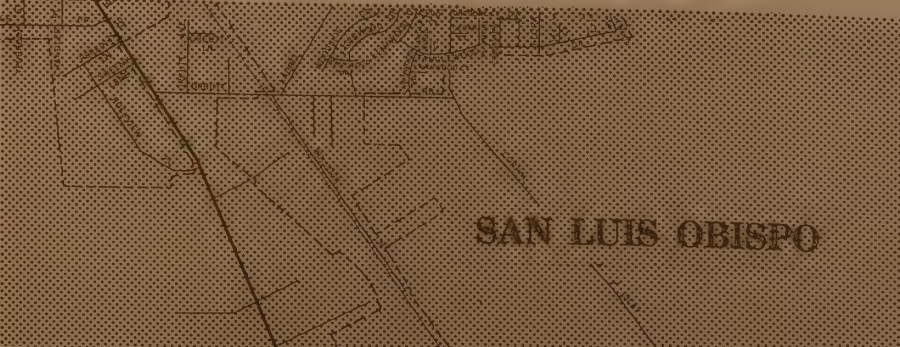




RETAIL SHOPPING



DUE TO SAN LUIS OBISPO'S ISOLATED LOCATION, ITS RETAIL COMMUNITY HAS EXPERIENCED LITTLE COMPETITIVE PRESSURE TO DATE. RETAIL SHOPPING AND SERVICES WITHIN THE CITY ARE LIMITED. LARGE STOCKS OF SINGLE ITEMS ARE RARE, AND MANY ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH CATALOG ORDER ONLY. DISCOUNT STORES DO NOT EXIST AND LOCAL RETAILERS "LIST PRICE" MOST ITEMS. MANY LOCAL PEOPLE WILL OCCASSIONALLY TRAVEL TO A LARGER CITY FOR A DAY OF SHOPPING. RESISTANCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE IS EVIDENT. ABSENTEE OWNERSHIP OF MANY COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES HAS MADE IMPROVEMENT DIFFICULT. ATTEMPTS TO MAKE THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT MORE ATTRACTIVE THROUGH A STREET-TREE PLANTING PROGRAM, AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE SIGNS, AND A PROGRAM TO DEVELOP A "MISSION PLAZA" HAVE MET WITH VERY LIMITED SUCCESS. AT THIS WRITING, THE FIRST SERIOUS COMPETITION IN THE FORM OF A PERIPHERAL SHOPPING CENTER IS MATERIALIZING.



SAN LUIS OBISPO



FLOOR AREAS

TOTAL	22,974 SQ. FT.
MAIN HALL	7,800 SQ. FT.
LOUNGE	1,200 SQ. FT.
BANQUET ROOM	5,900 SQ. FT.
KITCHEN	900 SQ. FT.

CHARACTERISTICS

BUILT IN 1950; COUNTY OWNED AND MANAGED. ATTRACTIVE, IN GOOD CONDITION, AND WELL LANDSCAPED. LIMITED ON-SITE PARKING. CONTAINS STAGE AND ANCILLARY AREAS.

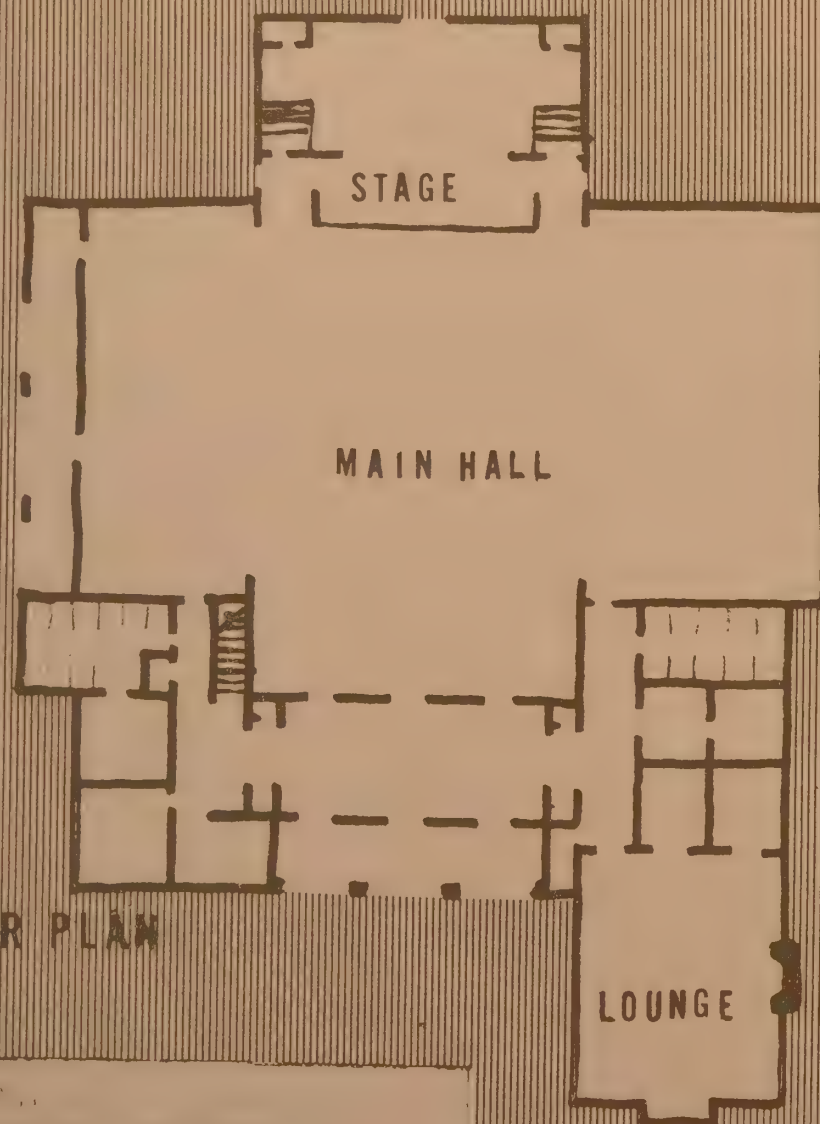
WELL LOCATED CLOSE TO MOTEL COMPLEX AND FREEWAY. WITHIN ONE MILE FROM CITY CORE AND FROM CAL POLY.

REMODELING POSSIBLE.

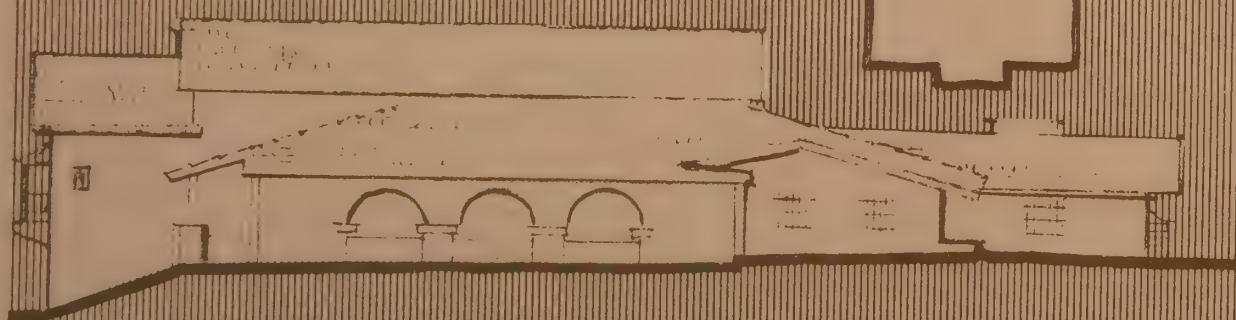
SOURCE OF INFORMATION

DAN DIXON, COUNTY DIVISION OF PARKS AND BEACHES.

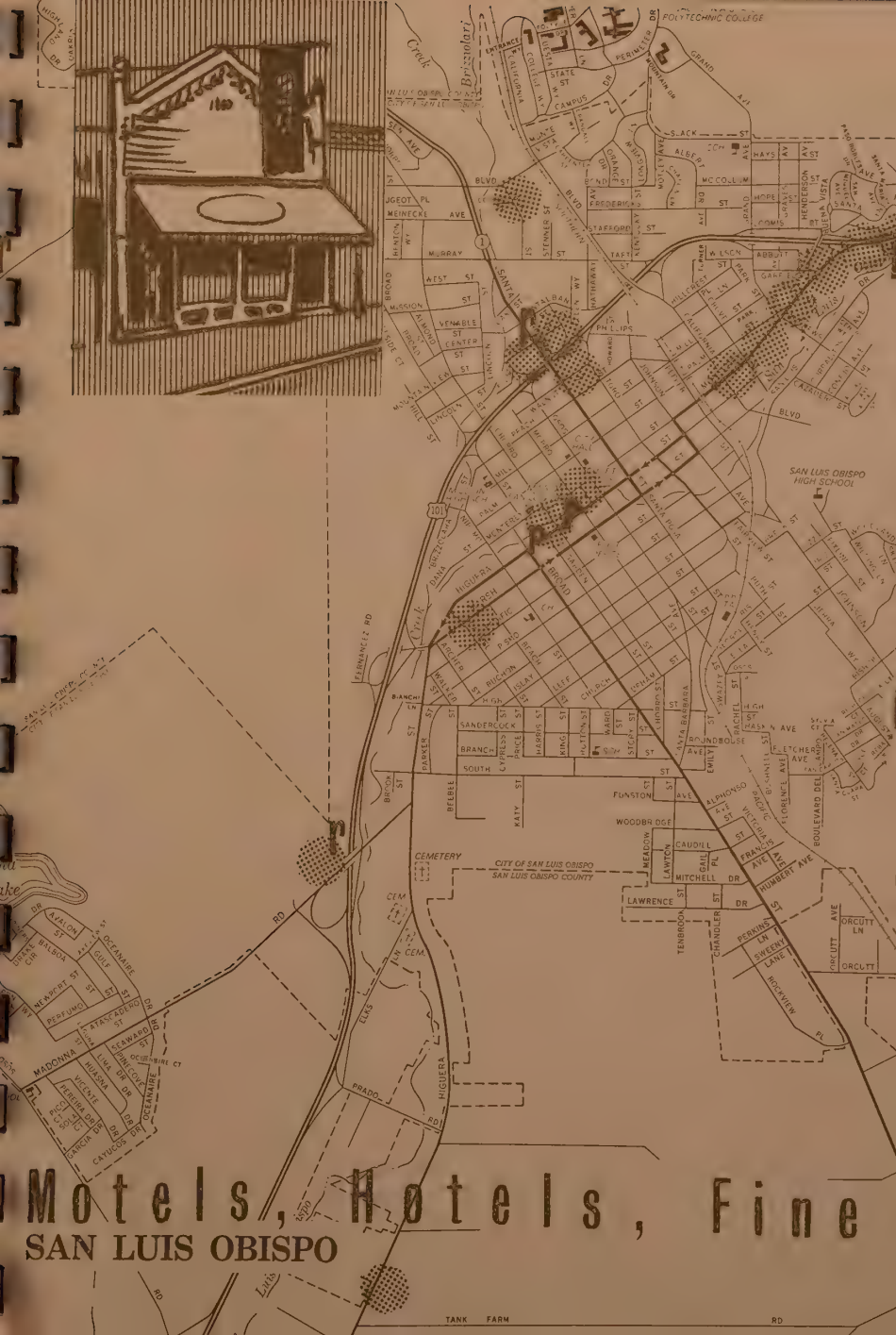
BASEMENT PLAN



MAIN FLOOR PLAN



VETERANS' MEMORIAL BUILDING



APPROXIMATELY 1650 ROOMS NOW EXIST IN SAN LUIS OBISPO'S TWO HOTELS AND 29 MOTELS. 18 OF THESE ESTABLISHMENTS HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED AS GOOD TO EXCELLENT BY THE REAL ESTATE RESEARCH CORPORATION IN THEIR 1964 REPORT, "ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC POTENTIAL - SAN LUIS OBISPO." MOTELS ARE SITUATED CHIEFLY NEAR THE MARSH STREET INTERCHANGE, THE HIGHWAY ONE INTERCHANGE, AND ON UPPER MONTEREY STREET; SEVERAL OLDER MOTELS ARE LOCATED ON OLD HIGHWAY 101. THE TWO HOTELS ARE LOCATED IN THE CORE AREA.



THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LISTS 45 "PLACES TO EAT." THE POPULARITY OF SIX RESTAURANTS ATTEST TO THEIR HIGH QUALITY; THESE ARE: THE CIGAR FACTORY, CORCORAN'S, THE MADONNA INN, THE MOTEL INN, RANCHOTEL, AND THIS OLE HOUSE. SEVERAL FOREIGN FOOD RESTAURANTS EXIST, BUT THESE ARE FAMILY ORIENTED AND CAN NOT BE CONSIDERED DISTINCTIVE.

Motels, Hotels, Fine Restaurants
SAN LUIS OBISPO

motel/hotel survey

In order to test reaction of that segment of the community who have been and/or will be directly associated with convention guests, a survey was conducted amongst the operators of 14 of the city's 31 hotels and motels.

Personal interviews were held and data was collected regarding the physical facility, types of guests, rates charged, seasonal fluctuations, expansion plans, affiliations, and promotional activities. The survey also collected opinions of the operators of these establishments regarding a convention facility for San Luis Obispo.

a n a l y s i s

San Luis Obispo's hotel and motel facilities appear to be adequate. Seasonal variations place a heavy demand on lodgings during the summer months and a low demand occurs during the winter. Those facilities located in the prime highway access areas are generally attractive and well maintained. Rates are comparable to other communities for similar facilities.

No unanimity of opinion exists amongst hotel and motel operators with respect to the desirability of a convention center. Some say a convention center would mean more people and, hence, more business, and would be good. Some think the town is too small to support a facility (to the point of it being an economic liability), and the lack of things to do is cited as a deterrent to attracting conventions. All agree that a convention center would probably help their businesses, but are concerned about the location of such a facility. Laguna Lake, which has been discussed by the City Council as a possible site, is looked upon with alarm. The prospect of very large motels/hotels moving in around a convention center so located has created much anxiety amongst established businesses who are concerned with the effect this might have on their investments.

More promotional work was felt to be needed. Some are disenchanted with the Chamber of Commerce to the point of cancelling membership. Use of bed tax monies is a hot issue. Many feel bed tax money should be spent to promote tourism. Based on their assessments of San Luis Obispo and its ability to handle conventions, many believe that the city should: (1) concentrate on tourism first; (2) promote those convention facilities which already exist; and (3) if this promotion meets with success, then build a convention center.



The fourteen hotels and motels surveyed contained 493 units; twenty-one of these units have been constructed since 1965 and 276 units have been remodeled or redecorated within the last eight years.

Rates range from \$7.00 to \$18.00. Two of the fourteen establishments do not have seasonal rate changes. Thirteen of the fourteen give commercial rates.

Eight of the fourteen made special mention that many guests were related to Cal Poly--visiting parents in particular; otherwise guests were typically salesmen, businessmen, and tourists.

The peak season was noted as ranging from June through September; and slow season was delineated from November through March. Newer facilities well related to the freeway had the least fluctuation in seasonal occupancy.

Ten of the fourteen establishments belong to the Chamber of Commerce; twelve of the fourteen belong to the Motel/Hotel Association; four belong to the Mission Trails Association; and none belong to the Highway One Association.

Thirteen engaged in advertising, but not extensively. Media used was quite varied and ranged from guide books of various associations, through newspapers (local, Cal Poly and large cities), to post cards and matchbooks.

All establishments distribute community information literature. Chamber of Commerce material was used extensively (some felt material needs to be improved).

To the question, "When people ask, 'What's there to do in this town?', what do you suggest?", operators replied that they distributed pamphlets and maps on which they noted points of interest. The following aspects of the community and its environs were repeatedly noted: historical buildings; the Madonna Inn; the Cigar Factory; Cal Poly; bowling, golfing and fishing sports; the movies; and Morro Bay and Avila Beach.

Regarding a San Luis Obispo convention facility, the following data and opinion was specific:

1. Only three of the fourteen establishments noted ever receiving inquiries from their guests regarding convention facilities in San Luis Obispo, and two of these inquiries related specifically to their facility.

2. Eleven thought a convention facility would be an asset to San Luis Obispo and gave the following reasons:

"Yes, if it wasn't too large (500-600). Small size would discourage conventions which would become rowdy."

"Yes, to get more people into San Luis Obispo, but there aren't too many towns of 25,000 that can support a convention center."

"Yes, if it were located properly--not Laguna Lake area; right now San Luis Obispo suffers from a lack of entertainment facilities."

"Yes, small conventions."

"We need a facility other than Madonna Inn."

The three who thought a convention facility would not be an asset were unanimous in their feeling that the town was still too small for such a facility.

3. As to how a convention facility might effect their businesses, all agreed that if the facility were "properly" located, they would profit to some degree.
4. The strongest assets of San Luis Obispo as far as promoting the city as a convention city were enumerated as follows:

"Location--people enjoy beaches, Morro Bay and Hearst Castle."

"Climate--scenic beauty."

"Half way point between L. A. and S. F. ; lots of people don't want to go to the big city."

"Affords a place to get away from the big city."

"Crossroads--fishing--water sports--outdoor activities."

5. Only six thought San Luis Obispo was ready for a convention facility now, and four of these six qualified their yes answers. Six were definitely against a facility now. Two were undecided. The following reasons were typical:

"Yes, if it were small. Would have to encourage the building of more places to eat."

"Yes, but will need more Chamber of Commerce advertising--San Luis Obispo is off the beaten track."

"Yes, for a small one."

"Yes, conventions want to come here, but have to go to a big city because we don't have the facilities."

"Is the city and surrounding area ready?"

"Don't believe conventions are really the answer; tourism should be promoted."

"No, San Luis Obispo is not well enough known to support a convention center."

"No, the town is too small."

"No, a convention center would financially kill San Luis Obispo; it would be a burden on the city."

"No, haven't seen too great a number of small conventions for the facilities that we already have."

6. Regarding the number of accommodations which exist in San Luis Obispo, four felt there is presently a surplus, four felt things were "just right," three complained of seasonal shortages and surpluses, and no one thought there was an outright shortage of accommodations, although one stated there was a shortage of "good ones." Two had no opinion on this question.

Remarks made by operators of these establishments during the course of the interviews indicate a variety of attitudes on the question of a convention facility. A few of these remarks follow:

"Let's first try to book up a lot of small conventions in the winter then, if the present facilities can't handle it, build a convention center."

"Money would be better spent promoting winter tourism."

"Not enough night life in San Luis Obispo."

"San Luis Obispo is neither an entertainment nor a resort center."

"Why not a civic center auditorium instead?"

"Would encourage private enterprise to build this facility rather than the city."

"Business clique (old-timers) against progress; expansion of college would help our business."

"Town has little or no social activity."

"The city should forget the idea of trying to build a convention center!"

"It's the women that spend the money and there's not enough here for them to do while their husbands are attending meetings."

"If not properly placed, could divide city."

"Would rather like to see this town cater to the tourist trade. Let's make this a GOOD tourist town first!!"

"San Luis Obispo has no public transportation and inadequate air service."

"Where would it be located? There is a lot of local money invested in motels on the 'strip.' Out-of-town money will reap the benefits if a convention center is located in the Laguna Lake area."

"Bed tax money could be used for a convention center."

"Lots of guests are interested in this area. They view San Luis Obispo as virgin territory. Want to get out of the big city rat-race."

"We need a sign at the entry to San Luis Obispo stating the advantages of the community."

attitudes : civic leaders

In order to test reaction to the idea of San Luis Obispo as a convention city, interviews were held with the following individuals whose special knowledge and/or position within the community were adjudged by the investigators to have given them comprehensive overviews of the city with respect to the convention feasibility question:

CLELL W. WHELCHHELL

Owner Dennis Transfer Company and Mayor of the City of San Luis Obispo

RICHARD D. MILLER

City Administrator, San Luis Obispo

JAMES KIMBALL

Owner Kimball Motor Company and President of the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce

MEL H. MCDONALD

Manager San Luis Obispo Branch Crocker-Citizens Bank and Immediate Past Chairman of the Economic Development Committee of the Chamber of Commerce

FRAN WALLACE

Executive Manager, San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce

GEORGE BRAND

Editor San Luis Obispo County Telegram-Tribune

ALEX MADONNA

Owner Madonna Inn

FRANCIS MCNAMARA

Realtor and Chairman of the Real Estate Board Subcommittee Which Selected This Research Topic

HOWARD FRANKLIN

Realtor and Chairman, San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission. Represents Supervisorial District 3 (San Luis Obispo City) on the County Planning Commission

NED ROGOWAY

Director San Luis Obispo County Planning Department

analysis

Only four of the ten interviewees gave unqualified yes answers to the basic question of the merit of San Luis Obispo as a Convention City. Another four qualified their answers suggesting time and change would have to occur before the idea could become reality. Two answers were basically negative.

Qualified and negative views indicated concern with (1) a lack of a convention facility, (2) a questionable willingness on the part of the community to meet convention competition, (3) a feeling that San Luis Obispo would not be attractive to the convention goer due primarily to a lack of "things to do", and (4) a lack of cohesiveness amongst the factions of the community which must necessarily work together if success in promoting and hosting conventions were to be achieved.

From a positive standpoint, economic benefit was recognized as going beyond the hotel/motel, restaurant, and service station levels and the effect of new dollars in the community upon all facets of community life was stressed, such as development of jobs for unskilled and semi-skilled people. The public relations value of conventions for attracting future tourists and developers was cited repeatedly.

San Luis Obispo was deemed attractive to conventions because of central location, climate, natural beauty, and local and nearby attractions--primarily recreational.

The City has not been more attractive in the past, in the opinion of the interviewees, because the community hasn't really promoted what is already here, and secondly, because of a lack of a facility that would be attractive to larger groups. The lack of "things to do" was felt to be hurtful.

Improved promotion was the principle suggestion made for improving San Luis Obispo conventionwise; several specified that bed tax funds should be used for promotional purposes. Local government was seen taking a leadership role, specifically by developing a comprehensive plan delineating those areas best handled by private business and those areas which local government can best effectuate and carry through. Private interest in a Convention Center was deemed doubtful; construction of such a center would probably have to be done by Government with possible help from schools and the Civic and Fine Arts group if the Center were multi-purpose in design.



Interpretation of community attitudes varied from optimism to pessimism. The prevalent feeling was that the community has a low-keyed interest which might be turned to enthusiasm if the idea were kept within "reason" yet be imaginative enough to spark community pride to carry through.

Responses to the following questions have been purposefully scrambled and do not relate to the order in which the interviewees' names have been presented.

Q. WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO THE IDEA OF SAN LUIS OBISPO AS A CONVENTION CITY?
SPECIFICALLY: DOES THE IDEA HAVE ANY MERIT? YES OR NO?

A. "Yes, potentially."

"Yes for groups to 600; No for groups of 1500-2000."

"Yes theoretically; no practically."

"Yes, it does have merit."

"100-150 could be handled; otherwise my reaction is generally negative."

"Good!"

"Yes, but gaps must be closed."

"Yes, many things going for it."

"The idea is OK, but I am not enthusiastic about our chances."

"Yes, great idea; good possibilities."

Q. IF THE IDEA OF SAN LUIS OBISPO AS A CONVENTION CITY DOES NOT HAVE MERIT, WHY NOT?

A. "Lack of facility."

"The convention business is ruggedly competitive; San Luis Obispo is not prepared to 'give away' the necessary meeting spaces (free) to meet competition."

"Leadership is lacking--factions necessary to make town attractive are not pulling together."

"San Luis Obispo's location is not terribly good; most organizations want a centralized unit and as a result Los Angeles and San Francisco will control most conventions."

"Women need something to do; what have we here really?"

"We would have a difficult time competing with areas like Monterey - Carmel which have had tremendous publicity over the years playing up their attractiveness. They have captured peoples' imagination--people want to go there."

"Not all conventions are good; some cause more headaches than they are worth."

"Doubt if people would find San Luis Obispo exciting."

"No shopping or cultural things to do."

"We just might have a 'white elephant' on our hands if we go out and build a first class convention facility. (If we do, it should be first class.)"

The following response was typical of that received to the basic question:

IF THE IDEA OF SAN LUIS OBISPO AS A CONVENTION CITY DOES HAVE MERIT, WHY?

Q. "WHAT DO YOU FEEL WOULD BE THE BENEFITS TO SAN LUIS OBISPO IF IT WERE TO PROMOTE ITSELF AS A CONVENTION CITY?"

A. "The most important benefit would be income that the city would receive from people attending the convention during the year. "

"Like any other industry, but better in that schools do not need to be provided. Little effect on police, fire, and other public services and utilities. "

"Conventions will make city known to potential outside investors. "

"Acquaint people with area for future tourism and eventual re-settlement. "

"Jobs developed (maids, bus boys, waitresses, etc.) for people with less than good skills or knowledge (such as high school kids) for which the community presently has a difficult employment problem. "

"Money new to the community, even though it is taken in primarily by hotels, motels, restaurants, service stations, etc., nevertheless revolves through the community many many times and effects all residents in some positive way; for every dollar taken in, there would be a \$7.00 volume benefit. "

"Nationwide publicity would be received as a result of all who visit city as conventioners and talk about us at home. "

Q. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE ASSETS OF SAN LUIS OBISPO WHICH WOULD MAKE IT ATTRACTIVE TO CONVENTIONS?

A. "Central location - draw from Los Angeles and San Francisco."

"Climate - lack of fog and frost and number of cloud-free days."

"Beautiful setting of city."

"Nearby attractions such as Hearst's Castle, beaches, golf, fishing, etc."

"Location - Central California on the Coast. Coastal exposure within a few minutes is rare and we have it."

"Cal Poly is an important convention drawing card for San Luis Obispo."

Q. IN PAST YEARS, SAN LUIS OBISPO HAS HOSTED A FEW SMALL CONVENTIONS: WHY IN YOUR OPINION, HAS SAN LUIS OBISPO NOT BEEN SELECTED BY MORE OF THE MANY ORGANIZATIONS LOOKING FOR CONVENTION SITES?

A. "Lack of promotion; we have no public relations worth the note."

"Our facilities are not adequate:

1. We do not have a Center to care for large meetings.
2. In the past, we have not had enough overnight facilities."

"The Veterans Memorial, Elks Club, and the Madonna Inn are all we have in the way of moderately-sized facilities."

"We haven't exerted ourselves."

"Lack of many small meeting rooms which are as essential to many conventions as a large meeting space. Except for Cal Poly, we do not have a grouping of many small meeting spaces in any one place."

"We can handle small conventions, yet we have failed to go for them."

"Not enough off-hour activities."

"No means exist for 'setting up' outside activities; i. e. , bus tours to outlying activity areas."

"Lack an attractive (unique for its size) shopping center."

"Weak Chamber of Commerce - people don't pitch in and work well together."

Q. WHAT STEPS MIGHT LOGICALLY BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF SAN LUIS OBISPO AS A CONVENTION CITY BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

A. "Promote Bond Election to raise funds to build convention center."

"Help provide facilities by use of bed tax income, general fund monies, and support of any necessary Bond Issue."

"Improve city's attractiveness."

"Advertise in select publications to promote San Luis Obispo as convention city."

"Use bed tax monies (only) to promote city."

"Upgrade promotional material that we already have."

"Defray wholly or partially the rental cost of meeting facilities for convening organizations."

"City should build a multi-purpose community center which could serve both the community and those conventions we might be able to attract."

"City subsidy of Chamber of Commerce important; Chamber is best equipped to do city's public relations work."

"Local government should cooperate very closely with Chamber of Commerce and all local businesses in setting up one plan to sell San Luis Obispo for conventions."

"Government has to take financial responsibility; private capital not interested in developing a large convention center."

"City must develop a comprehensive plan and stop thinking of nickels and dimes; it must settle on a plan for the entire Central Business District not just the Mission Plaza, piecemeal development is doomed to failure."

"City government could act as an annealing force to get merchants and owners together."

"San Luis Obispo must work with neighboring cities; area is too small for this city to be attractive as a convention center by itself."

Q. WHAT STEPS MIGHT LOGICALLY BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF SAN LUIS OBISPO AS A CONVENTION CENTER BY QUASI-PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

A. "Proper body to promote conventions is the Chamber of Commerce."

"Chamber of Commerce can provide booking service:"

"Public schools could assist in financing facilities (if multi-purpose) in return for partial use."

"Civic and Fine Arts Association, likewise, could promote and help finance a multi-purpose type facility in return for partial use."

"Chamber of Commerce could serve as catalyst in promoting public understanding of benefits of conventions to the economic welfare of the city and hence the need for proper facilities."

Q. WHAT STEPS MIGHT LOGICALLY BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF SAN LUIS OBISPO AS A CONVENTION CITY BY VARIOUS TYPES OF PRIVATE BUSINESSES?

A. "Develop private facilities of a scale that would permit several small conventions to go on at same time."

"Individuals should 'talk-up' San Luis Obispo in their own organizations and knock themselves out" when guests are here in order to make them feel at home."

"Private business should definitely look to its long-term future and shun the temptation to make the 'fast buck'."

"Individual businessmen could build many adjunct facilities such as night clubs, bowling alleys, golf courses, dance halls, restaurants, motels, etc."

"Private business could provide an entire convention facility, but it is doubtful whether such an undertaking could be profitably capitalized in a city as small as San Luis Obispo!"

Q. WHAT IS YOUR INTERPRETATION OF LOCAL INTEREST AND ATTITUDES; DO YOU THINK BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT AND THE GENERAL CITIZENRY COULD OR WOULD GET TOGETHER AND WORK COOPERATIVELY TO PROVIDE THE FACILITIES AS WELL AS THE COMMUNITY SPIRIT NECESSARY TO DEVELOP AND TO PROMOTE SAN LUIS OBISPO AS A CONVENTION CITY?

A. "Local interest and attitude are good."

"Conventions have greater economic benefit potential for San Luis Obispo than does 'Industry.' If people can be sold on these economic benefits they will go for the necessary facilities."

"No great interest to date; motel people are not sold on the idea. Feeling is not crystalized within the community."

"Doubtful as to whether people are yet ready to work together towards this objective. There exists an intangible, impossible-to-pinpoint attitude here of everyone looking out for himself."

"No problem in getting people to work to this end if we don't go off the deep end. There is always an 'anti' group."

"In this city one finds a lot of conversation, but when it comes to action, there will be a let down. People here are very provincial."

"Depends entirely on public relations."

"There are always people who don't want town changed; however, trend is more positive. The City Council and leading businessmen are aware of the benefits of conventions."

"If San Luis Obispo city is to go a convention center alone, the plan must be highly imaginative in order to capture the enthusiasm of the people and move them. Much could be done to develop community pride."

analysis

It has been observed that the most active conferencing and/or conventioning segment of a community is the business and professional segment. San Luis Obispo does not appear to be an exception to this observation.

It is of interest to note then, that a substantial majority of local businessmen and professionals believe San Luis Obispo could benefit economically by developing a convention center. Only 21 of 60 respondents to this survey, however, chose to qualify their belief with an amplifying remark, and of the 21 remarks received, 12 were either qualified in some way or were outright negative.

San Luis Obispo's businessmen and professionals are active in numerous business, professional, fraternal, civic and other types of organizations at Local, District and State levels; they are active as well in leadership positions in these organizations.

Based on their own convention experiences, their knowledge of San Luis Obispo, and assuming proper facilities were available, the vast majority of respondents to this survey (54 of 60) felt that San Luis Obispo would indeed be favorably considered by their organizations as a convention city. This response is significant and suggests a willingness to "push" San Luis Obispo provided a proper facility were available.

It is important to note that local people believe that central location, climate, nearby recreational areas, natural beauty, and the Hearst Castle State Park are San Luis Obispo's best selling features.

"The first step in soliciting a convention ordinarily is to arrange for local members or the Local Chapter of the National Organization involved to issue an invitation....usually...backed up by simultaneous or well-timed invitations from civic organizations and city officials....if all other factors are equal, the local members-sponsored invitation is much more likely to get results than a purely commercial one."

CONVENTIONS, AN AMERICAN INSTITUTION
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONVENTION BUREAUS
CINCINNATI, OHIO

attitudes: businessmen & professionals

A number of local business and professional people were surveyed to obtain reaction to the convention feasibility idea and to gain knowledge of organizational affiliations and possible organization support for conventions in San Luis Obispo. Cal Poly staff was not solicited; however, one of the 60 questionnaires returned was from a faculty member.



60 respondents answered question as follows:

Q. DO YOU FEEL A CONVENTION CENTER WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO THE ECONOMY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO?

A. Yes 53;
 No 4;
 No Answer 3;
 (60)

REMARKS:

"A center as such could be compatible with and augment tourism during "off-season periods."

"I believe an office to coordinate convention activities would be more appropriate than to try to duplicate Las Vegas' Center or the Cow Palace."

"Yes, but not if it were built on the Cal Poly campus!"

"San Luis Obispo needs every dollar it can get to better the future for itself and its people."

"Not only do conventions bring money into San Luis Obispo, but they expose this area to 'prospects'."

"Recreation and Tourism remain our prime industry. A convention center should bring groups to our community, as we now have the other attractions normally required for a convention."

"A convention center would certainly aid the economy of our city - especially if conventions were held here bimonthly, etc. The increase in sales revenues by our businessmen would be tremendous."

"Not at this time unless it was considerable larger than the accommodations at the Madonna Inn and the Veterans Building, and then you might have motel accommodation trouble in the summer months."

"Visitors would patronize hotels and motels, restaurants, movie theatres, and shops."

"Convention center - yes, with civic, cultural, recreational areas built in to make it a multi-purpose facility for greater use."

"Should not be too large. Groups up to 1000."

"Feel it's a must! Our area is a 'natural' for conventions with its location and many recreational facilities. We have widely appealed for more tourists and they certainly contribute to our economy. Yet we have provided mighty few facilities for them."

"Obviously, any program which would bring money into San Luis Obispo would help the economy. However, I wouldn't think a convention center would be the answer. Attracting new businesses by property tax relief and good relations with Unions would do far more to benefit the economy than a 'convention center' would."

"Yes, our central location, good climate are big advantages, but a city this size cannot afford an 'all-out' operation in competition with larger cities."

"For small (50-100) and medium (up to 1500) sized groups there is a need. Many now go to Fresno or Bakersfield only because they have the facilities available."

"Need suitable place of size to accommodate large groups."

"It would only help a few people--it would also bring in a lot of undesirable people as it does to every city where conventions are being held--this we do not want."

"Not enough to justify the expenditure of local public funds as these facilities would be used primarily by people from other areas. Convention facilities could be furnished by a large hotel, motel, or a restaurant and motels. However, San Luis Obispo needs good, attractive facilities for use of local organizations. There is a demand for meeting places for medium and large-sized groups."

Q. LIST THE ORGANIZATIONS OF WHICH YOU ARE A MEMBER WHICH HAVE SOME TYPE OF DISTRICT, REGIONAL, OR STATE "CONVENTION".

A. 60 persons responded to this question and these 60 represented the following 75 different professional, business, fraternal, civic and other organizations which hold conventions:

Amateur Archeologists...American Arbitration Association...American Cancer Society...
American College of Surgeons...American Dental Association...American Institute of Floral
Designers...American Legion...American Medical Association...American Society for
Engineering Education...American Society of Dentistry for Children...American Society of
Travel Agents...Association of Credit Bureaus of California...Auto Dealers Association...Bank
of America - Managers Conference...Beach Buggy Club...California Collectors...California
Council American Institute of Architects...California Escrow Association...California Land
Title Association...California Optometric Association...California Medical Association...
California Real Estate Association...California State Dental Association...California State
Florists Association...California Society of Oral Surgeons...California Society of Professional
Engineers...California Society of Certified Public Accountants...Catholic Daughters...Central
Coast Square Dancers Association...Conference of California Historical Societies...Controllers
Society...County Historical Society...County Medical Association...Danish Lodge...Delta Sigma
Phi...Duplicate Bridge Club...Eastern Star...Elks...Episcopalian Church...Escrow Association...
Exchange...Farm Bureau...Golf Club...Grange...Heart Association...Hi Twelve Club...
Jaycees...Knights of Columbus...Lions...Masonic Lodge...Monday Club...National Underwriters...
Native Sons...Odd Fellows...Pacific Coast Orthodontists...Parent Teacher Association...
Rotary...San Luis Obispo Pilots Association...Savings and Loan...Scubba Diving Association...
Service Station Association...Sierra Club...Society of Real Estate Appraisers...Society of
Residential Appraisers...Soroptimist...Sportsmen's Association...Tri-County Optometric Society...
United Volunteer Service...Western Banking...Western Orthopedic.

NOTE: It is virtually impossible to compile a list of all organizations which have local representation. The 1967 Roster of Organizations published by the Chamber of Commerce lists 156 organizations active in San Luis Obispo, 133 of the 156 organizations are local affiliates of State or National organizations which meet in convention from time to time. Yet only 19 duplications exist between the 75 organizations represented by this questionnaire and the 133 conventioning organizations listed by the Chamber of Commerce. Without question, these 189 different organizations do not represent the sum total of organizations with local membership. A complete list for San Luis Obispo might easily be double this number.

Q. LIST THOSE ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH YOU BELONG AND WHICH YOU BELIEVE WOULD CONSIDER SAN LUIS OBISPO FOR THEIR CONVENTION CITY. APPROXIMATE THE ATTENDANCE.

A. The 54 who believed San Luis Obispo would be considered, represented 48 different organizations whose attendance was estimated as follows:

50 delegates or less	8 organizations
50 - 150 delegates	17 organizations
150 or more delegates. . .	27 organizations

Note: The total of meetings (52) exceeds the number of organizations (48) because some organizations were estimated to find San Luis Obispo attractive for district meetings and Regional or State meetings.

Q. ASSUMING PROPER FACILITIES WERE AVAILABLE, WHAT ARGUMENTS WOULD YOU USE TO SELL SAN LUIS OBISPO AS A CONVENTION SITE TO YOUR GROUPS?

A. Selling points of San Luis Obispo were numerous in the opinions of the respondents. The standout points in rank order were: (1) Central location, (2) Climate, (3) Nearby recreation, (4) Natural beauty of countryside, (5) Hearst's Castle.

Q. ARE YOU AN OFFICER OR COMMITTEE MEMBER OF ANY OF THESE GROUPS?

A. 30 (50%) of the 60 respondents were officers or committeemen and represented 25 different organizations.

Q. DO YOU FEEL THAT SAN LUIS OBISPO WOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A POTENTIAL SITE FOR A CONVENTION FOR ANY OF THE GROUPS YOU BELONG TO (ASSUMING PROPER FACILITIES WERE AVAILABLE)?

A. 54 felt that San Luis Obispo had definite potential as a convention city for their organization. Six did not believe San Luis Obispo would be attractive to their organizations.

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